

USMA BOARD OF VISITORS – 23 FEBRUARY 2026 – MEETING TRANSCRIPT

Col. Khanh Diep: Ladies and gentlemen, good morning, and welcome to the February 2026 meeting of the United States Military Academy Board of Visitors. I'm Col. Khanh Diep, the USMA Chief of Staff, and Mr. Dave Nagle is the Designated Federal Officer for the Board.

The Board of Visitors operates under the authority of Title X, U.S. Code Section 7455. This Board is an advisory board, subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act. The United States Military Academy is the sponsor of the Board on behalf of the United States Army, which is the agency that receives the benefit of the Board's advice and recommendations.

This meeting is open to the public, however, members of the public attending open meetings and briefings of the Board are not allowed to present questions from the floor or speak to any issue under discussion. Any member of the public can file a written statement with the Board. These proceedings are being recorded and summarized minutes of the meeting are being prepared.

This is today's agenda. After brief opening remarks, the Chair will conduct Board business. This meeting serves as the organizational meeting of 2026. Board business will consist of electing a chair and a vice chair for 2026, approving the 2026 rules of the USMA Board of Visitors, approving the minutes from the July 2025 meeting. Following board business, academy leadership will provide an academy update to the Board. The remaining part of the meeting is dedicated to open discussion among members of the Board.

Please now give your attention to the Chair of the Board of Visitors, Congressman Steve Womack. Sir?

Chairman Womack: Thank you. The meeting is now called to order. I want to welcome everyone. Thank you for taking time out of your schedules to attend this meeting. And not lost on me is the fact that we have a little weather, and it is made arriving back in Washington complicated for some members who are traditionally here. But to see this turnout of members is pretty incredible to me, and I want to thank you for making the special efforts to get here.

The Board of Visitors is officially tasked to report to the President on all matters pertaining to the U.S. Military Academy. We are not in the chain of command, but we serve, rather, in an advisory role. We use our regular meetings to gather information in our official capacity. In addition, where we can, we, as appointed members of the Board, draw on our personal experience and expertise to provide advice and counsel to the

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Superintendent on strategic matters of interest to the President, the Congress, and the public.

I'd like to welcome the members of the public attending today's meeting, and acknowledge the statements and questions the Board has received from the members of the public. These statements have been read and digested by the Board, and we thank the public for sharing their concerns and for their interest in the U.S. Military Academy.

At this time, I'd like to invite Lt. Gen. Steve Gilland, the 61st Superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy, to provide his opening remarks. Supe, the floor is yours.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Thank you, sir. Chairman Womack, Vice Chair Ryan, distinguished members of the Board of Visitors, ladies and gentlemen, good morning, and thank you all for being part of this Board. We appreciate you taking the time to be here and giving us the opportunity to highlight some of the continued excellence taking place at your United States Military Academy.

I'd also like to welcome Mr. David Fitzgerald, our Deputy Undersecretary of the Army right here next to me. Sir, we're honored to have you here. Thanks for making the trip, and we look forward to hearing from you in a few moments.

When we met last summer, I emphasized that this is your United States Military Academy, because each of you is a stakeholder in this institution and our mission – not just as members of Congress or members of the Board of Visitors, but as citizens of our nation. Your service and advocacy helps West Point deliver the leaders of character that our nation and our Army needs, and that is what the American people expect.

Our team looks forward to updating you this morning on some of our programs that prepare our cadets to lead our Army's combat-ready formations upon graduation. Additionally, we'll highlight USMA initiatives supporting the Army's transformation and modernization efforts. These initiatives allow us to leverage our intellectual capital and expertise to help solve some of the complex issues that are facing the Department of War and the Department of Army.

On behalf of the entire West Point team, thank you again for being here this morning, and thank you for your ongoing support of the United States Military Academy and our Corps of Cadets.

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Chairman Womack: Thank you, Supe. On behalf of the Board, we are honored now to have the Deputy Undersecretary of the Army, Mr. David Fitzgerald, join us today. Mr. Fitzgerald, we'll give the floor to you.

Mr. Fitzgerald: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Distinguished members of the Board, and Lt. Gen. Gilland, Sup, it's my true pleasure and honor to represent Secretary Dan Driscoll, and the rest of the Army leadership, at today's Board of Visitors meeting. This is the closest I would have probably ever gotten to West Point. I had to sneak in the Officer Corps through OCS myself, so it's a real extra honor. I know you all have a busy agenda, so I promise to keep my comments brief.

First, on behalf of Sec. Driscoll and Gen. George, Chief of Staff, I want to thank everybody in this room for their continued support, for all you're doing for the Army generally, and the United States Military Academy specifically. As many of you know, the Army is in one of our most profound periods of change, and we're changing everything from weapons and tactics in our fighting formations to business systems at the headquarters level. And so the point of all that change is not just for the sake of change itself or to cause turbulence. It's to make the Army more agile and better prepared to win the wars when called upon. None of those changes would be possible without the support of the people in this room.

Second, when we think about West Point, it's important to keep in mind that what matters is we produce leaders of character who are ready to go be leaders, and platoon leaders, in the Army formations. And both Sec. Driscoll and I, and any officer who's served in uniform, know what a privilege it is to lead soldiers. Any West Point program or initiative that results that results in more capable leaders standing in front of our soldiers is a good program, and one that will be supported energetically by headquarters Department of the Army. Any decision this Board makes that results in a better and more lethal Officer Corps will have the full support of the Secretary and the Chief. On that note, please feel free to reach out to me or my team with any support that you might need in support of that important mission. Thank you for having me here today.

Chairman Womack: Thank you so much. At this time, Col. Diep will provide administrative remarks and conduct a rollcall.

Col. Diep: Before we take roll, I would like to make a few administrative announcements. The last meeting of the Board of Visitors occurred on July 11th, 2025. A quorum was present. Board members approved the minutes of the November 24 meeting and reviewed academy topics to include an update on cadet summer training.

I would like to direct members' attention to the packet in front of you,

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which includes the agenda and slides for today's meeting, as well as the following items: rules of the 2026 Board of Visitors to be voted on today; minutes from the July '25 meeting to be voted on today; statements and comments from members of the public received since the last meeting in July of 2025.

For the record, the following members are in attendance: Senator Joni Ernst, Senator Tim Kaine, Senator Lisa Slotkin, Congressman Steve Womack, Congressman Patrick Ryan, Congresswoman Stephanie Bice, Congressman Pat Harrigan, Lt. Gen. Retired Michael Flynn, Maj. Gen. Retired Dan Walrath, Mr. David Bellavia, Dr. Meaghan Mobbs, Ms. Maureen Bannon. The following members are absent: Senator Jerry Moran, Congressman Sandford Bishop, Jr., Congressman Wesley Hunt.

For the record, Mr. David Fitzgerald, the Deputy Undersecretary of the Army, is present today as the Secretary of the Army's representative. Additionally, the United States Military Academy command and staff members, and the members of the public, in attendance today are asked to please sign in, ensuring their attendance is noted on the sign-in sheet located on the table by the entrance. This will become a matter of record.

Mr. Chair, sir, based upon attendance today, we have a quorum.

Chairman Womack: Thank you, Col. Diep. We'll now turn to Board business. The first order of business is the election of the '26 chair and vice chair. Since a quorum is present, the Board will conduct an election of officers for 2026. We will be electing a chair and a vice chair.

Before I open the floor for nominations, I'd like to just note that any member of the Board is eligible for chair or vice chair position. Now, as you note, we just did this last summer. That was our last meeting. But because of events beyond our control, shutdowns and other circumstances, we just had the single meeting last year. And it was a bit late when we elected those officers.

So at this time, I'm going to open the floor for nominations for chair. Is there anybody with a nomination that would like to be recognized here? Yes, sir?

Mr. David Bellavia: I'd like to nominate you, Representative Steve Womack – keep the band together.

Chairman Womack: Thank you.

Participant: Let's do this again.

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Chairman Womack: So we have a nomination. Is there a second to that nomination?

Sen. Elissa Slotkin: I second.

Chairman Womack: We have a second to the nomination. Any discussion or any other nominations? Hearing none, then the question is on the nomination of yours truly as chair for 2026. Those in favor, say aye.

Participants (Unison): Aye.

Chairman Womack: Anyone opposed, say no.

In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it. The motion carries, and what a great honor. Thank you so much for the opportunity to lead this distinguished group once again for 2026.

Now, the next order of business is the election of the vice chair for the Board of Visitors. Is there a nomination from the floor for vice chair? Ms. Ernst?

Sen. Joni Ernst: Mr. Chair, I nominate Congressman Pat Ryan of the great state of New York.

Chairman Womack: Very good. There's a nomination for Congressman Ryan. Is there a second to that nomination?

Sen. Tim Kaine: Second.

Chairman Womack: There is a second to the nomination. Any discussion or any other nominations from the floor?

Hearing none, the question is on the nomination of Pat Ryan of New York to be the vice chair of the Board of Visitors for 2026. Those in favor shall say aye.

Participants (Unison): Aye.

Chairman Womack: Anyone opposed, no.

The opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it. Congressman Ryan, congratulations. You are the vice chair for 2026.

The next order of business is approval of the rules of the Board of Visitors for 2026. Members were sent a copy of the rules in advance of today's meeting. Is there any discussion regarding the rules? Is there a motion to approve the rules of the Board of Visitors?

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Dr. Meghan Mobbs: So moved.

Chairman Womack: So there is a motion. Is there a second?

Rep. Ryan: Second.

Chairman Womack: There is a second to the motion. The 2026 rules of the Board of Visitors are approved.

Next item of business is approval of the minutes of our last meeting in July of '25. Any discussion, or any additions or corrections, to the minutes for 2025 – July of 2025? With no further discussion, is there a motion to approve the minutes of the July 2025 meeting?

Sen. Ernst: Motion.

Chairman Womack: There's a motion. Is there a second?

Sen. Kaine: Second.

Chairman Womack: There is a second. The minutes for the July 2025 Board of Visitors meeting are hereby approved.

Based on the recommendations from the last meeting, we've moved the open discussion – which we previously had prior to the Sup's report – to follow the academy updates to better focus discussion among those Board members. So no further discussion. This concludes Board business.

At this time, I'd like to turn the floor over to Gen. Gilland to provide an academy update to the Board. General, as always, we appreciate you and your team for all you do for our Army and our nation. We look forward, as always, to your report. The floor is yours, sir.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Thanks. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you again for being here today. We always appreciate the opportunity to highlight the excellence of our nation's next generation of leaders of character at the United States Military Academy. The bottom line is, your Corps is doing incredibly well. The United States Military Academy, as we think about the different initiatives that we're going to cover with you today, is in a very good position. I would add, with a little bit of emphasis to remind everyone, the United States Military Academy is not a college or a university. It is 'the' United States Military Academy, where values and standards are based – the same values and standards at USMA as anywhere else across the Army – and we all have the responsibility to demonstrate what right looks like. 'Duty, Honor, Country' is more than our motto; the ideals and virtues that

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are foundational to all that we do as USMA, and it defines who we are as graduates, and the expectation of all graduates, who are leaders of character, who live honorably, lead honorably, and demonstrate excellence.

For our first slide, you'll recall that we were out at Merth Hall last summer at Lake Popolopen, and it was in the midst of our cadet summer training. At the time, the class of 2029, our current plebe class, was about three weeks into their cadet basic training, or "beast." Well, at West Point, we like to say that every cadet majors in character and leadership. I would also say that we double down with a major in grit and toughness, and that was on full display last summer.

A couple quick things that our cadets did throughout the summer. Over 3,400 total cadets were trained in the three primary training events that we do at the United States Military Academy. Almost 1,000 cadets graduated from various military courses. This included over 650 from our assault school, almost 100 from airborne school, 4 cadets were out in Hawaii – went to the jungle operations training course out there. And actually, with the Army opening up the new jungle operations training course down in Panama this year, we've already coordinated with Army, and we're sending cadets down there to attend that course. In addition, we had 10 cadets that graduated from the Sapper Leader Course, and 1 that graduated from the German Rangers School. We had over 1,000 cadets that went out to CTLT or Cadet Troop Leader and Training, which is they go out into the Army across all the different formations in the role of a platoon leader, and get the experience for about three weeks of being immersed into a unit.

I always look back to 1919, when Douglas MacArthur became the superintendent at the United States Military Academy. He came from World War I. And one of his initiatives was to get the second class out to Army units, primarily Fort Dix in New Jersey – which at the time was a large base – into these positions primarily to be exposed not only to our Army, but really the backbone of our Army, which was our non-commissioned officers. Because the experience from World War I was that our graduates were not as prepared. So we continue that today, over 100 years later.

Our cadet basic training, which we are in the midst of, as I said, it culminated in August, the annual 13-mile march back from Lake Frederick. Additionally, we had over 350 alumni who participated in that across 49 classes of West Point. That ranged from the class of 1960 all the way up to the class of 2018. We have done this program, the alumni march back, with the cadets – or the new cadets I should say – for 26 years now. And we've got 2 grads that have participated in all 26. Clearly, they're

retired, and they have a little bit of time on their hands.

A few days later – if we can go to the next slide, please – as we started the academic year, the class of 2029 was formally accepted into the Corps of Cadets during their acceptance day. That’s what you see off on your left. And then our rising second cadets, the class of 2027, they committed to completing their next two years at West Point and to their post-graduation active duty service obligation during their affirmation ceremony, which is what you see here on the right. We were fortunate that the members of 50-year affiliate, which was the class of 1977, and Lt. Gen. Bob Lenox was the speaker for that affirmation ceremony. It’s pretty powerful, because when you think about it, here’s the second class. They’re raising their right hand. They’re taking the oath for the second time at the academy. It’s two more years at West Point, and then depending on what their respective branch is, it varies from 5 years – which is the minimum active duty service obligation – up to 10 years for those who go aviation once they complete flight school. And what I’ll mention a little bit later is that over a third of this graduating class will be in May, almost a third, have signed up for additional active duty service obligations. So when you think about commitment, that’s inspiring.

We’re also fortunate this year, as we think about those people – and this is a snapshot of the people who have come to visit and speak to our cadets and the academy. We’re honored to host the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Dan Razin Caine. He kicked off the academic year, and really our this year’s academic theme, which was projecting lethality, addressing the multidimensional challenges in the Indo-Pacific. He covered topics that included evolving security threats in the Indo-Pacific and around the world, the importance of defense innovation, and the capabilities most needed for the next generation of leaders. He charged us, as an academy, to be entrepreneurial in our thinking, to innovate faster, and to think about how we are going to fight and win the next war in a, quote, “creative, diabolical, and cunning way.” Gen. Caine brings a little different perspective, and we’re fortunate that we had him.

Additionally, as you look here on the right, you’ve got former U.S. Ambassador to South Korea and the former INDOPACOM commander, Admiral Retired Harry Harris. He talked about foreign policy, strategic security, and international cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. We also had the Secretary General of NATO, Mark Rutte, and Lt. Gen. Sir Charlie Collins – right down here on the bottom – which is the U.K.’s home commanding general, as our current Roosevelt Lecture series speaker, and really, the transatlantic bonds that form the relationship that the U.K. and the U.S. have. Additionally, down in the lower left, just a few weeks ago we were fortunate to have Curtis Buzzard from the SAG-U in Europe, which is a security assistance group for the Ukraine commanding general,

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and Maj. Gen. Horbatiuk, who is Ukraine's SAG-U representative. We were fortunate they made the time to come to visit, had a discussion with a class. And I don't mean a class of 18, but one of our classes of cadets, and just really talking about the experience of Ukraine and the environment that the Ukrainians are fighting the Russians in. If you go to the next one? Here we go. Thank you.

Congressional visits. Many of you here, we're honored to host you or your teams at West Point. We had Senator Ted Cruz from Texas that came in. Senator Kaine came up and visited up from Virginia. We had Senator Markwayne Mullin who came in also from Oklahoma, and then Representative Adam Smith. He's been there a number of times. He came in to share his insights with our cadets. We really appreciate these types of engagements, and it is an open invitation to all of you to come and visit the United States Military Academy. Again, you are the stakeholders in the academy.

What you see here, in December, we had our branch night. So this is our seniors, the class of 2026, and they receive their branch assignments, which is done through the talent base branching process. Now, what we saw through this class, 80% of our class branched into operations branches. 81% went into the multidomain operations branches. One of the things that we look at, when we think about our contact sports teams specifically, I'll put that in the category of football, rugby, hockey, wrestling, lacrosse. 88% of our cadets branched into operations, and 91% of those cadet athletes into the multidomain operations.

When we look at it, 98% of the cadets got one of their top 5 branch preferences. 95% received one of their top 3 preferences. Then through the rating system that we have from the Army, a cadet is either most preferred, preferred, or least preferred. 93% of the branches received future officers that were in the most preferred category.

Dan, I don't know if you recall. I think you probably got your number 1 choice. But you were worried about getting your number 10 choice, weren't you?

MG(R) Dan Walrath: That's right.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Absolutely. As I said before, approximately one-third of the class incurs an additional active duty service obligation for their branch of choice. Aviation saw an increased opportunity now that the 10-year ADSO has become normalized. This, in fact on Wednesday night, will be this class' opportunity to select their first post. So their first unit of assignment as they come out of West Point after completion of BOLC and the lieutenant military schools where they will be going.

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And I'm sure, Representative Harrigan, you probably remember that night, or maybe a little bit, right?

Rep. Pat Harrigan: It was a little disappointing for me.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Was it? At least you can remember it. I don't remember.

Army-Navy. We're honored to have the Commander in Chief and Secretary of War at the game. Our uniforms were really in the theme of the 250th birthday of the United States Army. I will tell you, I thought – I mean, the uniforms, the theme, the story that was our army as we went out across the nation was awesome. Everything was great, other than the result, which was not great. And that's all I'll say about that.

But the one thing I would also submit, when we talk about Army-Navy as an event, we had 7.8 million viewers across the nation that tuned in for our game on the national stage. And I think it's important, because again, we represent the United States Army, and we are reaching out and touching those households around the nation that may not be touched by a recruiter or anybody else.

Our athletics. We're really fortunate. So far, we've got two league champions this year, our women's soccer team – which is pictured over there, we're in the Patriot League – and our women's cross-country team. Last year, we won the President's Cup, which is for the top school in the Patriot League. We're on track this year, after the fall competitions amongst the different colleges, universities, and the two academies that belong to both us and Navy. We're on track right now. We're on the top of the standings. That can always change.

Additionally, our football team, we were fortunate to go to Boston and the Wasabi Fenway Bowl, where they absolutely crushed UConn on a cold Saturday afternoon. Then as we look at our Cadet athletes specifically and what they're doing, not only on the pitch, or on the field, or in the pool, or on the court. 537 cadet athletes made the Dean's List this last semester. 23 of those cadet athletes had a 4.0. 15 teams had a GPA of 3.0 or higher, an average of 3.0 or higher, in the first semester. And 50 of our cadet athletes were just named to the 25-26 Patriot League fall honor roll. I'd say that's pretty significant when you think about the quality of cadet, and then the performance. Not only are these cadets doing everything that we require of them, but then also participating in NCAA Division I sports.

Additionally, as you look across the bottom, this is on our left, is Jackson Mayo. He's our Deputy Brigade Commander. He's also the captain of the men's basketball team. To his right, number 21 with the lacrosse stick

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there, that's Brigid Duffy. Now, not only is she an All-American Lacrosse playing, but she was also the women's soccer Patriot League offensive player of the year. So she's dual threat. She is also one of only 9 collegiate athletes that's on the team USA women's lacrosse team that will be competing in the World Championships in Tokyo this summer. And she's the only women's lacrosse player from the Patriot League that made that team. When you think about the quality of women's lacrosse and who they're picking – UNC, Duke, Northwestern, I mean you keep going down the line – she's one of those 9. It's pretty amazing. She also has a 3.4 GPA in biochemistry or something like that. Right, Dean, isn't she like med? She was a pre-med track at one point?

BG Shane Reeves: She's all right, sir.

[Laughter]

Lt. Gen. Gilland: And then Charlotte Richman right down here, she was named the northeast region athlete of the year by U.S. Track & Field and Cross-Country Coaches Association. She was the Patriot League runner of the year, and the 2025 NCAA Northeast Region individual champion. She is the Patriot League scholar-athlete of the year.

Finally, as we think about how our athletics contribute to grit, and perseverance, and toughness, and discipline, Coach K down here to the right. Coach K is a class of 1969 graduate. He is also – which he claims proudly – he also is the winning-est coach in NCAA Division I history with 1,202 wins. Now, here's the thing. He would have never had 1,202 wins if he wouldn't have had the 73 that he started his head coaching career off at West Point between 1975 and 1980. He is a head coach at two institutions, West Point and Duke. And he will tell you, and this is his quote, "When I was 18, I came here to West Point as a cadet, at the best leadership in the world, and it made me and taught me how to be a leader. 50 years later, and all the successes we've had, it's really a result of the foundation and everything I learned here at the academy as a leader and as a coach." Coach K. It's pretty significant. We give a Coach K award every year to our top cadets across an evaluation for character, leadership, and athletics.

Our next slide here. As we talk about scholarship, these four are just representative, and they're all seniors graduating here in May. You've got Johnathan Pinc. He's from Ohio. He's a chemistry major. He's presented research neurodegenerative disease at six different conferences. So a pretty brilliant mind of somebody, as we think about the future.

Max Felter in the middle. He's from California. He's an applied statistics and data science major. He's also a Master of the Sword awardee, and he's

the top cadet in his class for fitness through our Department of Physical Education. His research is focused on computer vision and sensor fusion. He's interned with Palantir, Lincoln Labs - MIT, and the Army Research Facilitation Laboratory applying AI and machine learning to Army data analytics. He's also the captain of his company's Sandhurst team.

Then Brandon Tran from California, an international affairs and Chinese double major, he is not only a Rhodes scholar, he's also a Truman and a Stamp scholar. He's worked on Indo-Pacific security issues that J2 of the Joint Staff calls him up to get some of his thoughts on China and the Indo-Pacific specifically. They got a personal relationship with him, and he participates in Sandhurst as one of our battalion Sandhurst officers.

So that's our three Rhodes scholars this year, of which for six years now, we've had multiple Rhodes scholars selected.

And then Mark Clemons, who's a Marshall scholar, he's from Panama City, Florida – down by where you're at, sir – international affairs major. He completed a military internship at AFRICOM over in Germany this past summer. He is also one of the founding members of our Department of Military Instructions Vanguard Initiative. The Vanguard Initiative is an additional military training group that COM has got broken down across different branches. What they do is they plan, prepare, and execute essentially enhanced tactics training during the academic year, and the COM can touch on that more in a bit.

These recognitions reflect not only these cadets' specific academic achievement and leadership, but also the war-fighting relevance of their scholarship. Their work and research directly contributes to developing the intellectual edge required to fight and win our nation's wars.

As we think about our scholarships specifically, and our scholars that have been selected, they usually retain at a higher rate in the Army than their classmates. So as we looked across an 8-year span, it was a 68% versus 53%. So 68% of our scholars retained or stayed in the Army. Whereas, 53% was the comparison. As we look at a 10-year average, 57% retention for scholars versus 40% as you think about the comparison group. When you think about over a 20-year, 52% completed 20 years versus about 29% compete a 20-year career in the Army.

Scholarship winners are promoted below the zone at significantly higher rates, about 15.8% compared to roughly a 6.5% promotion rate below the zone for their West Point peers. Also, STEM fields represent the majority of the scholarship winners, advanced winners. So in 2023, 82% of our scholars were in the STEM field. In '24, it was 81%. Then this past year was 83% of our scholars were in the STEM domain. All of our scholars

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incur an additional service obligation while in school, and of note, our scholars program at West Point was endowed by Brigadier General Retired Pete Dawkins. Not only was he a Heisman Trophy winner, the first captain, and also a Rhodes scholar, and has been pretty successful in life. And so he was very gracious to endow the future scholar program.

This year, we had 16 cadets accepted into medical school. We had 16 who applied. 100% acceptance rate into medical school. Believe me, whenever I come across our med school candidates – because they're going to be in the Army for a while. You all know that. I think the minimum is something like 17 or 18 years. I'm always looking for what their specialty is going to be. Because in 17 or 18 years, they're the ones that I want who are treating me is the way I see it, so they better do really well. And then if we go to the next slide here?

This past summer, late summer/early fall, you might have saw, there was some recognition, Cadet Larry Pickett specifically. He's a third class cadet, class of '28. He's from Raleigh, North Carolina. At the end of August, it was really our first football game. Him and his father, their family, come up for the football game. They went out to dinner afterwards. They were there that weekend. And they came across a disabled vehicle, and this vehicle went off the road, hit a power pole. The power pole broke in half, power lines down. There's fire from the vehicle. Him and his dad, they pulled over. They ran to the vehicle, and they got the driver out away from the danger and right before it burst into flame. So he was recognized in November at the Fox Nation Patriot Awards receiving the heroism award. And you can see his quote right there in the middle where he talks about, "At West Point, we're taught what it truly means to live with courage, honor, and selfless service. And that night was just one moment to live out what so many around me model every single day." And if you saw on ESPN, you saw some it, they ran it. But again, representative of all of our cadets.

In a couple weeks, at the Corps Founders Day Dinner, we will be presenting him with the Soldiers Medal in front of all of his peers, the Corps Cadets. He is an example of 'Duty, Honor, Country' in action, and he's just one example of selfless service, dedication to duty, and commitment to excellence that you will find through the Corps of Cadets.

This year, as we continue to celebrate the Army's 250th birthday, and then this year for America's 250th birthday, we are honored to play a role as West Point in forging our nation, as well as the generations of graduates that have come before us, and helping write that story. As we think about being established in January of 1778, and the celebration of our nation's 250th birthday that we are upon, and the role that not only the Military Academy but West Point has played in that for the past 250 years. And

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what we see for the next 250 years, the role that we will play, and how we figure into leading our army and leading our nation.

I would invite you to come and visit any time, see the excellence for yourselves. You'll find a warrior ethos is alive and well. The ideals of duty and country are at the core of everything we do, and that the tough, motivated young men and women who are committed to selfless service as our nation's next generation leaders of character who are ready to write the next chapters of America's story. So on behalf of the entire West Point team, we thank you for what you do. We thank you for your support, and we absolutely look forward to any of you to come and visit here in the coming months. Thanks for your attention.

Chair Womack, sir, I give it back over to you. Thank you.

Chairman Womack: All right. Let's see where we are on our list. I was so captivated by your report there, I kind of lost my place in our agenda.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: I only do that to you, sir. Nobody else is captivated.

Chairman Womack: Chief, are we headed to a break first?

Col. Diep: Yes, sir. We will. So ladies and gentlemen, at this time, we'll take a short break. Please be back in your seats in about 10 minutes. Thank you.

[Break]

Col. Diep: Ladies and gentlemen, if we can ask you to move to your seats? Thank you.

Chairman Womack: As everybody takes their seats again, we'll continue with our academy update here in just a minute. Let me say, administratively, after this meeting, Sup, I don't know how fast your team has to exit and get back to New York. But I'm going to make an offer here today to anybody that's down here that's never had a tour of the Capitol, if you would love to go on a tour of the Capitol and you have time, I'm going to make myself available after this meeting to be able to host something like that. So anybody that wants to take advantage of it, it'd be my honor to take them through. We'll even go down on the Senate side, which most of us on the House side consider to be like a nursing home.

[Laughter]

Participant: Wow.

Participant: Ouch.

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Participant: Shots fired.

Chairman Womack: I always tell my guests –

Participant: He says this after the vote, by the way, after the vote.

Chairman Womack: I always tell my guests to use their inside voice on the Senate side. But anyway...

Lt. Gen. Gilland: That's fantastic, sir.

Chairman Womack: But seriously, if anybody would like to do that, we'll be happy to accommodate.

Participant: Thank you.

Chairman Womack: So the academy update continues. And let's welcome our Commandant of Cadets, R.J. Garcia.

Brig. Gen Garcia: Thank you, sir. Chair Womack, ladies and gentlemen of the USMA Board of Visitors, good morning, and I'm pleased to be here with you today to provide you on updates of three of the United States Military Academy's most important programs: the honor code, the physical program, and the Sandhurst International Military Skills Competition. Next slide, please.

This morning, like I said, I'll provide you an update on our cadet honor code. All of our programs, the academic, physical, and military programs, are exceptional. And they are made exceptional by our honor code. Our honor code is the foundation of our cadet character education program. I would go so far as to say that our academy is exceptional because of the cadet honor code.

I'll be honest. When I became the Commandant of Cadets, I had to take some significant time to understand the cadet honor code. I had learned it as a cadet. I'd lived it. I carried it forward with me as an officer in the United States Army, but I had never been through an honor board. I never served as an honor representative at the cadet level, nor had I been on the Honor Committee. And while the cadet honor code, 'a cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do' has been and will be around for a long time, the honor system continuously adapts over time to the changing nature of our society. So as I came back, I needed to see what had changed and understand it.

So let me take a few minutes to discuss the history of the honor code and several watershed moments that have shaped the honor system. The

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history of the cadet honor code can really be broken down into three periods: pre-1920, 1920 to 1976, and 1976 to now. In 1817, Colonel Thayer, long considered the father of the Military Academy, established ethical considerations to commission or dismiss a cadet. This consideration was part of sweeping changes that he brought to the academy after being tasked with the superintendency of West Point. His focus was not on a cadet honor code, but on the ethical and honorable behavior required of an Army officer.

Col. Thayer believed that to develop this honorable behavior cadets should be immersed in rigorous academics in a highly regimented environment. The system that Thayer developed, and continued until 1920, was one that is referred to as a one-tier system, administered by the officers of West Point, not the cadets. That is a key point about Thayer's interpretation, or his work, to establish ethical considerations to commission or dismiss a cadet.

Just like Col. Thayer, Brigadier General MacArthur at the time, who assumed the superintendency of West Point in 1919, brought sweeping changes to the academy. Informed by his service during World War I, General MacArthur saw a growing distance between Thayer's vision and the changing nation of society. MacArthur stated, and I quote, "We boast about a cadet's truth and honesty, yet we don't trust him to go outside the gates of this medieval keep. I've been unable to discover the need for this combination of cloistered monastery and walled penitentiary. Many cadets think that I believe that as well to this day."

MacArthur realized, as he did with this with the academic, military, and physical programs, that character development of cadets was the number one priority, and the academy must adapt to prepare cadets for future service in a professional army manned by its citizens. MacArthur created a two-tier system, a cadet honor committee tasked with educating and training the Corps of Cadets on the cadet honor system and code and investigating honor cases to determine guilt or innocence. However, they had no legal authority to dismiss a cadet. Thus, the second tier. The second tier was an officer-run court martial that did have the legal authority to dismiss a cadet.

The most important part of the two-tier system was that cadets didn't need to merely comply with the cadet honor code, as they did prior to 1920, but they had to embrace it by administering it. It was their code, and embrace it they did.

Cadets initiated different forms of discretion. In 1924, '30, and '35, to name a few, the Cadet Honor Committee acknowledged that, if an offense was minor and admitted to by cadet, it would be disposed of by

disciplinary means. Cadets also made one of the most notable improvements to the cadet honor code, adding the toleration clause in 1970, leading to what some call the modern cadet honor code, or the code as it is today: “A cadet will not lie, cheat, steal, or tolerate those who do.” Four new words, “tolerate those who do,” fundamentally changed the Cadet Honor Code and set it apart from its collegiate peers.

MacArthur’s intent had been met. Cadets embraced the honor system and lived it, but there were issues. In 1951 and 1976, there were two cheating incidents that made national news and shaped the academy’s approach to honor and honor education. In 1951, over 90 cadets were found cheating. Seven were allowed to return. In 1976, over 150 cadets were found cheating, with more than 90 being allowed to return. Both of these incidents forced the academy to take a hard look at how the honor code and honor system were being implemented, with the most notable changes coming after the 1976 cheating incident.

Just as MacArthur saw in 1920, by the early 1970s, society was changing. In 1971, the cadet honor captain described the honor code, and I quote, “as slipping away.” In 1974, the cadet honor captain described the cadet honor code, and I quote, “in transition, and has come very close to failing altogether.” Society was growing more comfortable with litigation, and technology was rapidly advancing, challenging cadets in and out of the classroom. The cadet honor code during this time survived multiple legal challenges and scrutiny from all levels. This scrutiny and the challenges also guaranteed and confirmed a cadet’s right to due process and legal counsel.

In 1976, as a result of several Army-led studies, the academy implemented a one-tier system. This was a return, with a notable change. Cadets would run the honor system and make recommendations to the superintendent, who was granted, by the senior Army leadership, the authority of discretion. This ensured that cadets embraced the honor system, ran the honor system, and all cadets were afforded legal due process, which courts had determined they had to have in accordance with their constitutional rights.

Since 1976, the cadet honor code and cadet honor system have undergone mostly minor changes to support lessons learned by the Cadet Honor Committee, all under the oversight of academy leadership. An example is the adoption of the willful admissions process, a Cadet Honor Committee recommendation similar to previous allowances of discretion, where it recommended the willful admissions process. Where if a cadet admitted an honor violation, within 24 hours, they were automatically granted discretion. However, a 2020 review of the cadet honor system showed that the willful admission process was not meeting its intended purpose, and

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subsequently, the policy was removed by the superintendent.

Today, the cadet honor code and honor system are codified in USMA regulation 15-1 and USCC PAM 15-1, documents that are reviewed and updated regularly with input from cadets, staff, and faculty. Notable cadet efforts include a focused week of planning and training for the Cadet Honor Committee prior to the start of the academic year. In this case, the lesson learned was come back early, and prepare to train the Corps of Cadets, like any other of our cadet committees and groups that come back early to prepare. They come back a week early – or they will, we’ve initiated that this summer – to train themselves and make sure they’re prepared to lead the Corps in honor education and honor investigations.

They’ve also recommended – and we’ve adopted – increased honor training for all cadets. Once a quarter, the cadet honor captain briefs all classes on ongoing cases and provides complete transparency to the Corps of Cadets. And they debrief select honor cases at the company level to share lessons learned with their peers, and help educate people better. These cases are commonly referred to as X and Y cases. Some of our graduates may remember.

In conclusion, since 1870, the most important aspects of the cadet honor code and system endure. Cadets are expected to follow the cadet honor code in our day. The honor code is the cornerstone of the leader West Point development system, and achieving the outcomes of living honorably and leading honorably. Cadets don’t simply comply with the honor code. They live it. And by living it, they develop the character required to lead America’s sons and daughters in peace and in war.

I will now pause for any questions. Great. Thank you. I’ll now hand it over to Master of the Sword, Col. Nick Gist, for a physical program update.

Col. Nick Gist:

Good morning, distinguished members of the Board of Visitors, and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. As the head of the Department of Physical Education at the United States Military Academy, I’m honored to provide an update on how West Point’s physical program directly supports the academy’s mission to build, educate, train, and inspire leaders of character who are ready to lead America’s soldiers in combat and win.

Our work remains firmly rooted in a cultivating a culture of physical fitness of excellence, and preparing every cadet for meeting the physical demands of land warfare. The physical program’s curricular and extracurricular requirements and experiences all directly support the West Point’s Leader Development System, integration of character, and leader

development.

The physical program is intentionally designed to inculcate the warrior ethos, while developing movement lethality and mental toughness, attributes essential for Army officers, regardless of branch assignment. We deliver rigorous, iterative, and militarily relevant physical education and kinesiology curricular that directly support human performance. Integration of the Army's holistic health and fitness concept in our curriculum reinforces the importance of all readiness domains to pursue and demonstrate excellence. Every physical challenge we put before cadets, whether in the gym, on the field, or on a weapons range is designed to develop officers capable performing, leading, and thriving under conditions of extreme stress.

Across seven required physical education courses, cadets complete a program that assesses, develops, and provides the tools to enhance strength, endurance, agility, speed, power, coordination, and mobility. All is central for combat readiness. This includes courses in boxing, military movement, survival swimming, and combatives, in addition to courses that teach exercise science principles, Army fitness fundamentals, and Army fitness development. Development of the warrior ethos is integral to character development, and aligns with both the West Point Leader Development System and the Army leader requirements model of be, know, and do.

Over the last year alone, 152 cadets earned the Level 1 Modern Army Combative Certificate. 138 attained Level 2. 282 cadets earned the Holistic Health and Fitness, or H2F, Integrator Certificate. This pursuit of excellence is an attribute that demonstrates a healthy growth mindset, and it will positively influence the readiness of the units within which our graduates serve.

Cadets must also perform on demanding standards-based fitness tests, including the indoor optical course test, the Army fitness test, Maurne Obstacle Course, and water confidence course. With many versions of our ACFT, and now AFT, over the last seven years, the Corps has embraced the challenge, and performance is indeed excellent, but always with room for improvement.

Statistically, the Corps of Cadets averaged 548 on the previous a CFD, compared to the Army average of 490, and Army close combat MOS average of 519. More recently, the Corps average is 465 out of 500 on the AFT, compared to company grade officers across the force scoring 434.

Development is evidence across class years in seeing that, from cadet basic training to first class year, AFT scores improve from an average of

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455 to 475 for the first class cadets. We continue to challenge them by emphasizing the importance of fitness, with an increase from 10% to now 25% of their military development grade being AFT based. The cadet grading scale represents norming for the Corps of Cadets to incentivize performance. For example, a 465, the Corps average, is a B minus. As we anticipate rollout of the Army's new combat fitness tests in the coming weeks, the Brigade Tactical Department is using the Expert Physical Fitness Assessment, or EPFA, to expose cadets and prepare them for the event in the future.

For competitive athletics, they are part of the fabric of West Point, and all cadets must compete every semester at one of three levels: the intercollegiate level, which the Sup spoke about, the competitive club level, or company athletics or intramurals. These experiences reinforce discipline, resilience, teamwork, and the winning mindset we expect of future platoon leaders. Club teams led by cadets win national championships, earn all-American accolades and set records. Teams, such as women's judo, men's team handball, and orienteering won collegiate national championships this past year.

Picture on the left on this slide – excuse me, I didn't skip the video. I'll pause there, and let's show the video.

[Video Playback]

As the Superintendent has invited you all to come to West Point, it's truly best to see it in person. And in some cases, for people who've been there, Arvin Cadet Physical Development Center, maybe even smell it. And I mean that in a good way. I think a lot of our old grads, when they return, it reminds them of their experiences at Arvin Cadet Physical Development Center, and it's the highlight of any individual's return to West Point, especially during their reunions, to come back and observe cadets in action, like you just saw a small piece of there.

Now, picture on the left, that's Cadet Brooklyn Davis. This picture is from his plebe year. He's now a yearling sophomore. He set world and American records with – ready for this, I'll slow down – a 645-pound squat, a 535-pound bench press, and a 650-pound deadlift. Public math is dangerous. That adds up to over an 1,800-pound total on the three lifts. A lot of people maybe have become part of the 1,000-pound club. 1,800 pounds – that's absolutely amazing. And just an example of the pursuit of excellence and physical fitness, and mental toughness, preparation, nutrition, sleep, recovery, teamwork – all those things that go into making our cadets successful.

Several cadets also won national championships in boxing, judo, and

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powerlifting. These cadets represent us all in the fields of friendly strife across the country, and occasionally, internationally. Most importantly, these opportunities forge a competitive warrior spirit and team cohesion.

Complementary to the military program, and integrated with WPLDS, the West Point Leader Development System, athletics serve as a training environment to practice leadership and followership, adherence to rules of engagement, and development of a winning culture. To be sure, these following comments reflect the leadership of many individuals, teams, and agencies to include the Brigade Tactical Department, the Director of Military Instruction, the Corps of Cadets, and outstanding staff, faculty, and coaches across West Point. The physical program's most relevant effects are reflected in outcomes beyond the gymnasium and athletic fields. Cadets and graduates consistently excel in the Army's toughest schools and competitions, including the Combat Dive Qualification course, Best Sapper Competition, and Best Ranger Competition.

Our graduates perform exceptionally as platoon leaders and beyond in operational units around the world. Some examples. Cadet teams placed third and fifth in the Army-wide Best Sapper Competition in 2024 and 2025. We're taking steps right now to set conditions for another podium finish this year, with the goal of winning.

Hundreds of cadets volunteered to complete the Norwegian Foot March, a 30 kilometer overnight endurance event. Then Cadet Chris Verdugo, last year, set an international record, completing the event in 2 hours and 30 minutes, over 18 miles in 230 minutes, under load, in the dark, cold. We'll do that again this Friday night into Saturday morning. Over 2,100 cadets, half the Corps of Cadets, has volunteered to sign up for that event. I don't remember that my time in the early '90s. Excellence at the Combat Dive Qualification course, Air Assault School, Airborne School, and the list goes on. These results underscore the relevance and impact of a physical program built on rigor, realism, and readiness.

Picture on the upper-right here, company G2, Golf 2 Sandhurst team. is here at Fort Drum, or up there at Fort Drum, where they finished second among 26 teams in the D series winter challenge. Now, I don't know a whole lot about the winter challenge. But based on the photos and videos I saw and their accomplishments, it was grueling. And they did it alongside their Army counterparts, who've been training for this type of event in that environment, for a long period of time. This is one cadet company, company G2.

Rep. Harrigan: Go Gators.

[Laughter]

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Lt. Gen. Gilland: And Nick, Sgt. Major Powers, can you just kind of, for the crowd, give a little summary of what that was, and how our cadets did it on relatively little preparation?

CSM Powers: Yes, sir. So D series, hosted by the 10th Mountain Division, has got most of our Arctic warriors compete in that, from the 11th Airborne, 10th Mountain Division, and others, to include, of course, our cadets, and then a couple of ROTC units. It's just a grueling, cold, wintery challenge. Some water events. As you can see, they're doing cross-country skiing under load, a lot of tactical involvement. And I think the most impressive part, sir, would be that they're competing against real-world soldiers who train in the Arctic. And this company, Sandhurst company, they truly performed, and second place. We totally didn't expect it.

The Division Sergeant Major sent me a note well before the final results, and he's like, wow, you guys should be proud of your cadets. So we're really proud of them – their grit, their ability to adapt and overcome, and then compete in an environment that they were not trained to compete in, sir.

Brig. Gen Garcia: Sir, could I just add two comments? One, I expected it, number 1. But two, we had not trained for that all year. We got an opportunity to go. We handed the cadets the standards about two weeks prior, said, you're the number 1 Sandhurst company. What do you think? They said, send me coach, let's do it. And they took second place, not in the cadet category, in the Army category.

Participant: Wow. Incredible.

Col. Gist: On the bottom right, I already spoke about the Norwegian Foot March that, again, kicks off this Friday. If you don't have anything to do, Friday night, Sergeant Major, right, we get started? 2,100 cadets in that overnight movement.

In closing, the Department of Physical Education is fully aligned with the USMA's mission and the Army's priorities. We develop leaders who are discipline, fit, tough, and lethal, leaders who embody the Army values, the war ethos, and those who are ready to win on day 1. Thank you for your continued support of the physical program of the United States Military Academy, and of the young men and women who will soon lead America's Army.

Chairman Womack: I have a question, and this may be more of a Rance Lee question. The pipeline of young men and women matriculating into the Academy, as directed mats, how is their level of fitness in relation to the ability to

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compete and win at those higher levels, like what you just briefed? Are we satisfied with the level of fitness that these kids are coming to us with?

Col. Lee: Yes, sir. I believe so. I mean, again, it varies from where they're at in the country, but I think our candidate fitness assessment scores are very good, and give a very good indication that we're getting very good kids who are having good physical ability.

Chairman Womack: That's good.

Col. Gist: So I'm not going to counter the Director of Admissions. We sit next to each other on the Admissions Committee. "Satisfied" is an interesting word. I will say we're not really satisfied, right, because we have an obligation that, when they come to us, to provide them rigorous experiences. We're not the United States Naval Academy. So we owe them challenges in the physical program.

And I know the grads in the room – and there's many of them – they can agree that the physical program is incredibly rigorous, and it needs to stay that way. There are some societal differences now, for sure, but we're continuing to do the right thing through our admissions processes, as Rance puts it.

Chairman Womack: Thank you. Nick, can you touch on the a PFA with what the events are, and how we've been doing? Or maybe it's the COM?

Col. Gist: I can hit on it, sir. So the Expert Physical Fitness Assessment's been used for the Expert Soldier Badge. It's now being used as part of Ranger School. The Army's transitioned away from the old test and has the new test, and it's a more functionally-based test. It's a single event over a single period of time. Right now, the standard is 30 minutes. We're still awaiting the Army's final decision on what the rollout will look like. But it begins with the one-mile run and concludes with the one-mile run, and then the middle are a series of events, to include sandbag lifts, farmer's carry with full water cans.

So it's a more functional test. It's not as discreet as the old tests have been, or even the current tests. It's a continuous test with pretty high physical demand.

Chairman Womack: Uniform?

Col. Gist: Army combat uniform, sir, with plate carrier.

Chairman Womack: And combat helmet?

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Participant: ACH. Yes, sir.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: And COM, I think, we have done three of the regiments, or 2?

Brig. Gen Garcia: Two and a half, sir. We're working and a third, and we've had no failures yet.

Chairman Womack: And the Army standard is not with the plates and helmet, right?

Participant: Not right now, sir.

Participant: Correct.

Chairman Womack: The team has had the first class cadets performing with plates and helmet. And again, we haven't had a cadet fail yet. So it's pretty good, and they're taken that on. They're training for it, et cetera. Thanks.

Brig. Gen Garcia: Sir, if I could just add one more data point. If you can't tell, I'm immensely proud of the United States Corps of Cadets. This past year, we had an opportunity to send some cadets to the 10th Mountain Division to participate in their Expert Soldier Badge and earn it. And we had our first cadet earn the Expert Soldier Badge while he was a cadet. Prior to that, it was only an Expert Infantryman's Badge, and they weren't infantryman yet, and so they couldn't really earn it.

So we have now broke the code on that, and we're sending – right now, our number is 18 cadets are going out to Fort Riley with the First Infantry Division this summer, and to the 10th Mountain as well. We piggyback off their Expert Soldier Badge events. And we see this as a huge opportunity, one, to see ourselves and how our cadets are doing. So for all indications, are very good, as many of the other indicators show. They are already competing very well in our best-of-the-best competitions across the Army, and it helps us see ourselves, look at what we need to do better, to make sure they're prepared to serve in the Army and lead America's sons and daughters. Next slide.

I'd like to take an opportunity to brief you on our Sandhurst International Military Skills Competition. We'll start off here first with a quick video to give you some context and what it is. Go ahead and play the video.

[Video Playback]

A lot of great things occur at West Point, and I extend an invite to all Board members to come out to the Sandhurst competition. It's end of April, early May. We can certainly work with your teams to get you out there. It is an incredible event, where you see the grit and toughness, not only of our cadets, but our Army as we partner with ROTC and our

international allies and partners.

We have some graduates in the room. Sandhurst used to be a one-day event that really occurred for about two months. I did it twice – '93 and '95. I'm not ashamed to admit it. I did it once. I said, I'm good. I did Sandhurst. I really enjoyed it. One of my cadets came to me in '95 and said, you've done this before. I really need your help. I need a team member. I said, okay, I'll do it. I'll see you Saturday. The competition, quite honestly, I didn't think it was that difficult. But it challenged you a little bit with military skills, and you had to do some work.

That competition, if you remember it, graduates, is gone. It is decidedly different and harder. It is the world's premier international military skills competition. It occurs over an entire week. The first event is bringing in all of our international partners, training them up, testing them, making sure they're qualified to get in the pool, get in the water. We orient them to our weapon systems. They're not allowed to bring them over, so we loan them M4s, and we teach them and make sure they know how to shoot them, qualify on them, zero on them. Because they're going to shoot them as part of the competition, they need to be ready to use them.

It's a thinking man's competition. We've got a Sandhurst conference where all of the participating cadets come, listen to a senior Army leader. And we've extended that invite out to the First Corps Commander out in JBLM, and look forward to hearing from him. Gen. McFarlane, and hopefully he can make it. And it's a panel discussion of international partners on leading soldiers, the operating environment, what their country at the tactic level does, the operational level, what their concerns are, and how to learn from each other. Then that day, we start the competition. We race, a small race, to really start a draft process on where they will start on day 1 rotational events.

You see there in the middle, day 1 consists of 9 different events. They wake up, and based off the draft order they pick, they start at 1 of 9 stations. And they start working their way around West Point.

Now, the map looks pretty easy, right? That doesn't look like a big area. What you don't account for – and some of the graduates here are smiling – is the elevation change, okay? We're going all the way from the Hudson River to the top of Redoubt Four, beyond the stadium, as they navigate all the different rotational events that day.

Day 2, they do an afternoon/evening movement from West Point to Camp Buckner. That's about 8 miles, and probably a good thousand, or more, feet of elevation change under load. And then they do a round robin of activities there. You see at land navigation, they do a night shoot with

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their M4, an obstacle course, a day shoot, call for fire, crew-serve training, and then a crucible event back at West Point that ends the competition.

What you don't see is what it takes to get to this point. And this event is 36 hours, 21 miles under load, over 32,000 rounds are expended, and approximately 5,000 feet of elevation change when you take all of it into play. Next slide.

Like I said, what you don't see is how you get there to the final two days. It's a year's long competition now. It starts when they get back from the summer in September. Out of the 36 companies that we have in the Corps, each company fields a team, and they start competing every week up to Christmas holiday leave. At the end of Christmas holiday leave, we cut the field in half, but we don't give the 18 teams that didn't make it a day off. We take their up and coming captains and performers, and we acknowledge that they didn't do that well, and we put them with teams that make it forward so they can bring back lessons to compete and learn the next year.

There's not a way to hide out from doing well, and you can't sandbag this thing. We're taking the leaders of next year. So you didn't make it this year? You got to make it next year. And we put them with one of 18 teams that move onto the second semester. So in the second semester, we continue the competitions. At this point, we're really refining their military skills so they can compete and win at the final competition.

We pair that down to a final 10 teams, and the current standings are right there. G2, sir, is up there and doing very well. Go Gators.

For competition day – and this is really about partnerships across the Army. And as I talked about earlier with our international allies and partners, we have all service academies come, and they put together a team from their entire team of Corps of Cadets or Corps of Midshipmen. And to be honest, history has shown us, we can be at a little disadvantage. If you're the Brigade of Midshipmen, and you pick your top 12 midshipmen to compete, we're competing a little differently by company. So we actually form two all-star teams, our standards black and gold team. They compete on par with them, and our black team continues to dominate the competition every year.

We bring 17 international partners in, focused on the Dean's academic theme. So you see there, we've got teams from the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Japan. Obviously, we bring in from the Pacific, as long as other areas – the Department of War and the Department of Army – emphasize partnerships and rotate them as well. And then we have 16 teams that come in from ROTC. Those teams have not yet been

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determined. I know a couple of them. But what ROTC does is, by brigade, use their Ranger Challenge Competition to identify the two teams from each brigade.

A couple of noteworthy teams that have already gone through, we believe Texas A&M's coming. North Georgia College, a huge competitor, worked for many North Georgia graduates. They're gunning for us. They've already emailed. But we're ready, and I'm not worried about them at all. We'll educate them on how to do Sandhurst and then help them finish.

So that is our International Military Skills Competition. Again, I would offer to all of you, please come up and see it. It's an incredible opportunity, and I know it will demonstrate the integration of our academic program, as we integrate technology into all these events with drones. And there's a mystery event. We'll use our simulation center to do a building clearing, and they'll be using some of the most advanced technology that's developed both at West Point Works and in the industry so we can actually get real-life scoring so they can see and interact with simulated enemy that actually scores them.

I'll standby for any questions on anything we've talked about, whether it's the honor code, the physical program, or the Sandhurst International Military Skills Conference.

Lt. Gen (R) Flynn: How does an international team join that? Because I'm looking at the flags up there, and there's other countries out there that would probably want to participate.

Brig. Gen Garcia: Yes, sir. We only have room for 17. So we do a couple things to mitigate risk. The first is we ask any country that wants to participate to be an observer first. Our level of fitness is, to be honest, vastly different than theirs. And so many of them, we could give them a slot. They would not be prepared, to be quite honest with you. And we've had a couple of incidents of serious medical issues as they try to keep up.

So you see there... go back a slide, if you can? We have three observers this year: Thailand, Netherlands, and Lithuania. We generally will rotate out most of the teams, minus a few. The Sandhurst competition started with our U.K. brothers and sisters. So we always honor an invite to two of their academies. And then Canada has a very good team. They're very close, and so we invite both of their academies. But the rest of those 13 teams, really on a rotational basis.

Some, to be honest, will come one year. They can't afford it the next year, or varying things happen within their governments, obviously. Some, we just expose them, but we have a different emphasis in the Department of

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War, Department of Army, on where their focus is and building partnerships. So coming from INDOPAYCOM and the 25th, I'm very sensitive to making sure we've got Pacific teams out there that are coming back. So the Philippines, ROC, and Japan team are obviously there. And quite honestly, they do very, very well.

I tell cadets a story all the time. Before I got here, I was in the Philippines. American soldiers carry a lot of weight, a 3-day supply. The Filipinos carry 7 days of supply. They eat rice and canned fish, and they find their water, and they move quick. They're very, very good. And so we learn just as much from them as they do from us. And it's an honor to host them and have them, and it's an honor to learn from them.

And so that's the kind of discussion that comes out in the Sandhurst conference. These are cadets with their officers and leaders there talking about those tactical challenges they face in their own environment. And you can see some of the countries there: Sweden, Finland. Total different problem set out there, and we learn from them as well.

Participant: Great.

Brig. Gen Garcia: Anybody?

Chairman Womack: Thank you, R.J.

Brig. Gen Garcia: Thank you for your time.

Col. Diep: Before the Dean of the Academic Board comes up to provide an update, we would like to note for the record, Congressman Bishop, sir, joined the meeting at 0956. Thank you. Sir, we'll turn it over to John Reeves.

Brig. Gen Reeves: Well, good morning. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Brig. Gen. Shane Reeves. I'm the Dean of the Academic Board. It's great to see so many of you here today. I want to especially thank Rep. Womack to getting us down to Washington, D.C. It's great to be in a town that recognizes this uniform. I recently was in Cheyenne, Wyoming. I'm from Wyoming. And if you know about Cheyenne, it's an Airforce town – Missile Drive, F.E. Warren Air Force Base. I went there for a promotion ceremony, and I went to a coffee shop. I walked in with this uniform, and I saw this lady looking at me inquisitively. I was like, hey, ma'am, can I help you? And she's like, yeah. Are you a pilot, like an airline pilot? I said – I didn't have the heart to tell her I was in the Army. I was like, yeah, I fly for Spirit. We have a great hub here in Cheyenne. You should try it out. She was like, oh, I didn't know that.

The other reason I want to thank you is that it snowed it two feet at West

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Point, and I appreciate not being there to shovel the snow. And more importantly, to be able to develop my teenage daughter, and taught her how to use a snowblower. And that is not an insignificant thing to teach her, though she may have been to proficient too quickly. Because apparently, she was out snow blowing 1:00 in the morning. So I'm sure Sgt. Maj. Barretto will talk to me later about that, but I did not want to dissuade her from being entrepreneurial.

For the graduates in the room, you're thinking the coldest, darkest, harshest winter that ever existed was – pick your first year. Well, according to ChatGPT, that would be incorrect, unless someone's from the class of 1961. The coldest, darkest, snowiest winter at West Point is this winter right now since 1961. And the cadets were doing all the training the Commandant just talked about in the snow, so it's an interesting time up at West Point. But I am very thankful to be in Washington, D.C. with its de minimis snow versus being at home with my daughter. And actually, my wife will probably out there shoveling also. So I'm going to take you up not just up on your tour offer, but probably stay a couple extra days just to hang out.

So you all know that the purpose of the academic program is to provide an intellectual foundation so that our graduates can successfully navigate the complexities, the ambiguities, and the uncertainties of the modern and future battle space. And we do that through a rigorous and robust academic program with a particular purpose. We want to satisfy our cadets' intellectual curiosity. We want to create life-long learners, so when they walk across the stage they have – you can go back a slide. When they walk across that stage, they're critical thinkers who've embraced their professional identity and employed their intellectual abilities on behalf of the nation. Really, we want them to be creative, entrepreneurial, and innovative so that they are able to fight and win in the worst thing that humans do to each other, which is warfare.

But you have to understand a little bit of history about West Point to understand its relevance. So let me take us back to 1775, which is relevant to our 250th anniversary as a country. There's a guy named Gen. George Washington, who's looking for the most strategic place in the United States – at that time, the colonies – to put the Continental Army. So he picks the s-bend, or the west point, of the Hudson River to put the Continental Army and his headquarters, with the purpose of cutting the British in New York City off from their garrisons in the north. And he does that, and he very astutely recognizes the geography of that. And I would argue that West Point remains one of the most strategic places in the country. Maybe not for its geography, but because it's the home of the United States Military Academy.

But there's one thing that Gen. Washington also recognized. He was able to pick the geography, where the Continental Army and headquarters should be, but he didn't have the expertise that resided inside the soon-to-be-fledgling United States to build the fortifications. So he had to go to Europe, and he had to find a guy named Thaddeus Kosciuszko to come over and build the fortifications that made West Point the impregnable post that it became. And it did work. It did cut the British off. And that strategic importance didn't end with the Revolutionary War.

March 16, 1802, Thomas Jefferson signs the Executive Order creating the United States Military Academy, and he recognized it wasn't just a place to defend the young nation. It was a place to sustain our future nation. Because he understood that a republic couldn't rely on foreign military expertise or ad hoc leadership. You had to actually build a professional military class of officers who had the requisite expertise to lead an army. And so he established West Point to develop those professional officers who were grounded in science, engineering, and warfare. West Point became a strategic investment in the nation's future. Not just a place to stop the British, but a place to educate leaders who could adapt to changing character of warfare.

Fast-forward, the father of the Military Academy, a guy named Sylvanus Thayer, Superintendent from 1817 to 1833, he professionalizes the academy. He creates a rigorous program, a professional level of discipline, and he really starts talking about things like what we would call character today. And under Thayer, West Point becomes something new in our young republic, a professional military academy to produce officers who were both morally grounded and technically competent.

Thayer insisted on these strict standards for a very particular reason. He understood there are timeless characteristics of leaders. And those characteristics for West Point graduates are duty, honor, country. And that timeless foundation of what makes a West Point officer remains that. Those timeless traits remain valid. And you can talk duty, honor, country, or you can talk loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage – values. That's what makes an officer an officer. And those timeless traits have stuck with West Point from the beginning, and they remain there today.

But he also understood something else. Officers have to be timely. they have to understand what is happening now and be able to adjust to that – timely challenges. In his efforts, he really started to focus on engineering, really started to focus on this rigorous academic program, and it worked. It helped the graduates succeed through some of those trying times – the Mexican-American War of 1848, the Civil War, of course, and really through that industrial revolution. And he made the 19th century – the

technical tasks required to fight and win, was engineering, fortifications, roads, bridges, and coastal defenses.

And so in doing so, Thayer ensured that West Point produced not only those timeless of character, but those timely officers who understood the technical demands of warfare in that era. And as the United States rises to global power in the 19th and early 20th century, it was really made impossible, because its military leaders recognized and adapted to the revolutions in military affairs unleashed by that industrial revolution.

And I won't go into it, but you've heard about some of these other transformational leaders throughout our time in history – Douglas MacArthur, the 31st Superintendent from 1919 to 1922. Perhaps the most radical to all superintendents when it came to transformation – he transformed everything at the academy – but there's also another one. Post World War II, then President – I'm sorry, then Gen. Eisenhower, working under the auspices of Gen. Marshall, sent a man to West Point named Gen. Lincoln, who was his Chief of Staff. Took a demotion, and he modernized the academic program in 1946.

And so from railroads and telegraphs to rifle, artillery, and aircraft, officers who've understood the implications of technological and societal change have kept the Army effective and relevant. And so both this timeless aspect of West Point graduates, and this timely aspect, those combine to make the officers that we need to help us fight and win our nation's wars. And throughout history, academy graduates have led our armies, helped build the nation, explore space, and mastered industry. And West Point graduates are typically remembered for their leadership abilities. But in addition to leadership, many of them have had a technical expertise that the country's relied on.

For example, Col. George Washington Goethals, 1880, number 2 in his class, he was picked by then President Theodore Roosevelt to go do something that had never been done – build the Panama Canal. And then lead that effort, because he knew how to lead. Or you could go to another Roosevelt administration, another time period when a West Point graduate for the technical expertise was turned to. Then President Franklin Roosevelt turned to a guy named Gen. Leslie Groves, class of 1917, fourth in his class engineer officer. And said, hey, can you please build the most devastating weapon that the world has ever seen? And Leslie Groves, who wasn't an academic slack – he had also gone to MIT – was like, I can do it, and I can lead the team. He also then later on did the small task of building the Pentagon.

So history has often proven that the timeless and timely aspect of the West Point graduate is what is necessary to fight and win our nation's wars.

Because those who don't innovate we know lose. Innovation, if you don't innovate, you lose. And intellectual stagnation means you lose. And examples are replete with these.

The one that stuck out to me, because of our academic year theme this year, is the example of the HMS Prince of Wales and the HMS Repulse – two amazingly constructed and beautiful, most powerful battleships in the world. And on 1941, on December 7th, we remember that the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. But the Japanese actually attacked a lot of places on that day. They also went and did an amphibious assault north of Singapore. They went down and attacked the Dutch East Indies. And it was a concerted and concentrated effort by the Japanese to do this.

But the British weren't too worried. The British weren't too worried, because these two battleships were in existence. And to be truthful, the Japanese were worried. Because they knew they'd attacked Pearl Harbor, and they had sunk or destroyed eight of our battleships. They weren't too worried about our carriers, because at that time, the king of battle on the ocean was battleships. It's like battleships.

And so when the British are leaving Singapore to engage with the amphibious assault that's going to take place north of Singapore, they're not really worried about anything except they don't know where the Japanese battleships are. Because it's going to be a battleship conflict. And they're a little worried they don't have air cover, because they're like, we don't know where the Japanese ships are.

Now, the Japanese were extremely worried, because they didn't have any battleships in the area. All they had were some fighters. And so the Japanese said, we got to just slow down these British battleships, and so just antagonize them. Nobody in the world in 1941 thought you could sink a battleship with an airplane – nobody. Nobody thought they could.

So what happens is, the Japanese don't antagonize or slow down. To their great surprise, they sink the HMS Prince of Wales – which was nicknamed the "HMS Unsinkable," and you know how that goes. And they sank the HMS Repulse. In fact, the Japanese pilots are stating back, we're seeing the ships turnover. It can't actually be happening. And it was that moment – boom – that it was recognized that battleships are done. It was about aircraft carriers. And the Japanese went back to Tokyo and said, oh, no. We hit the American's battleships. We didn't get their carriers. That was a tactical win, not a strategic win.

And so what happened? Everything changed. And no one noticed it quicker than Winston Churchill who said, "Everything just changed." And it was that fast that naval aviation and the projection of power in the

Pacific became through aircraft, and battleships became passe.

History reminds us. It's a sober reminder. If you don't innovate, you lose. And when West Point develops the timeless leaders with character, with timely skills needed to fight and win in the specific era, the Army prevails. And if the Army prevails, the nation prevails.

The mission to produce leaders grounded in duty, honor, country has not changed. What has changed in the nature of the fight. In every era, this institution, West Point, has adapted its academic program to ensure its graduates understand the tools, technologies, and tactics required to win. That was true in Thayer's time. It was true in MacArthur's time. It was true in Lincoln's time. It was true in Goodpasture's time. It was true in Palmer's time, and it was true in Gen. Gilland's time. And it's true right now. But the fact is, those who don't innovate lose. We get it. We understand it. Those who don't stay focused on the objective lose. No matter what happens around them, no matter what the threat is, the United States Military Academy does not have the luxury to stray from its mission to provide the Army the timely and timeless officers necessary to fight and win. So that's the why of West Point.

Now, why does that resonate so much with me or with us? So I had an interesting experience. Meaghan will appreciate this. We've talked about this. I had a chance to go visit the Security Assistance Group – Ukraine. One of our academy professors, Lt. Col. Chris Graves – one of the best officers I know – was stationed for a year working under Gen. Buzzard as his strategic initiative advisor. And while visiting Chris, we went – and a couple of us. Dr. Kraig Sheetz went with me. We went, because I had to see it. I'm like, OK, what are we seeing out there? We went out to Germany. We went out to Poland. We went out to Zhengzhou. And as you sit there, you start to notice some things.

That conflict is something different. There has been 2 million casualties. Last year, the Russians, in 2025, had 416,000 casualties. They've launched 54,000 remote drones, 1,900 missiles at the Ukrainians. But here's what's different. Approximately 70% of those casualties are from those drones or those missiles. 28% from indirect or other means. 2% from direct fire. The threat's not from the door. The threat's from up top. The threat's everywhere.

And so I quickly realized, and Gen. Gilland and I talked, we're adapting. We're going to adapt right now, because we're not going to lose. And so we did. And we started to do a number of different things, and I'll articulate what those things are at the academy. But there's a couple other things, I would say, just to drive the point home on the sense of urgency and the need to innovate and transform.

Really, the threat of great-power conflict involving the U.S. looms larger today than maybe at any time since World War II, and that conflict's going to be costly. We know it. That's why you hear the Commandant say this is why he's focused on making sure that these cadets have the physical and military proficiency. And equally, I work with my partner to ensure that these cadets know how to think, and know how to outthink, our enemy, and be able to navigate all that complexity and fog of war. Because that's when the West Pointers are at their best. When the fog of war hits, that's when we expect them to rise to the top, and be able to use their asymmetric advantage, which is their intellect.

And so over this threat, this threat of this peer-to-peer conflict, it's very real. It's near. It's tangible, and we taste it every day. There's some data that supports it. I won't go too far in depth. But the great report that was recently published, from 1989 to 2024, deaths from state-on-state conflicts averaged about 15,000. Since 2014, that number has accelerated to over 100,000 a year, and that number is just going up a lot faster. And it's really an unraveling of the international system, and I think a lot of that can be traced, in large part, to the rise of China, both economically and militarily. Whether they're supporting Iranian missile programs, conducting joint military operations with the Russians, or selling air defense systems to Venezuela, the PRC enables its network of revisionist powers and rogue regimes to threaten U.S. interest around the world. China's militarization of the South China sea is a perfect example of that. And they're aggressive, and they're innovating, and so we need to be equally aggressive and innovate. And we are. You can go to the next slide, please.

So let me just explain to you some of the things that we're doing inside of the United States Military Academy connected to the academic program. So in 2024, we started the West Point Werx Innovation Hub. It is absolutely central to addressing these challenges. You can see in the upper-lefthand corner, that is the hub, the first part of the hub. That's the Sgt. Maj. of the Army sitting there. And the innovation hub where we align research, classroom instruction, and the Army requirements into one central idea. Project-based learning tied directly to real operational problems is critical. In today's environment, it's not a nice-to-have, it's essential. This is essential. Projects based, experiential based, hands-on learning is essential to ensure our cadets have the intellectual foundation, but are also connected to the Army. And many of our academic departments have formed research centers and enhance the classroom experience through projects that are directly linked to the Army's needs – directly.

Our innovation hub synchronizes these efforts by creating partnerships of

the Department of War, the Army, and industrial partners powerfully contributing to the Army's innovation ecosystem. Inside the hub, there are seven portfolios. They include AI and autonomy, directed energy, energy resilience, and security space, biotech, and law and ethics, and policy. So let me just give you a few examples of how these are playing out.

One example of how the portfolios will work is how far we've gone into preparing our cadets to understand and use artificial intelligence. We have created an AI task force at the United States Military Academy. I would argue, because I'm biased, but I think there's some data to support it, that West Point is leading the country in higher education when it talks of the use and integration of AI. We are one of the first schools in the United States to have a core course where every cadet will take a course in AI, called AI 105. One of the first schools in the country to have a core engineering sequence, and one of the first schools in the country to have an AI major.

And some of our upper class cadets are working all over the place when it comes to artificial intelligence. There's one project where they're working with Exia Labs to develop AI-enabled war game systems to test decisions against a thinking enemy rather than a scripted scenario. But one thing I'd be very clear on, we recognize the importance of making sure our graduates can succeed if all technology goes south, if everything goes black. If they don't have it, we understand they still need to have the critical thinking skills.

So we balance our embrace, our full-throttled embrace, of artificial intelligence by ensuring our cadets also have a significant understanding of what it means to be a thinker for themselves. It's really a balance and a nuance between critical thinking remains our foundation while also understanding how to use AI in a way that enables them as young officers.

And the portfolio of energy and resilience, you can see in the upper right here, we have projects ranging from advanced lightweight battery technology, which were first used at Camp Buckner, then they were used at Fort Irwin, and now they're being exploited throughout the Army all from the Innovation Hub, connections from the Innovation Hub. In the upper-right, though, which is something really exciting, which is our Power Reactor Operator Laboratory, or PRO Lab. This lab supports the Army's nuclear power training mission and reflects West Point's long-standing leadership in nuclear engineering. Hard to articulate how important West Point's involvement in nuclear power, nuclear engineering is. Over 90% of all of the Army's officers with nuclear engineering degrees come from West Point. And arguably, every Functional Area 52 comes through the Department of Physics and Nuclear Engineering at West Point.

But to further support the Army's nuclear power research and training efforts, we developed a new reactor operator course, and that's what that is. Where the first graduates of it will be in the summer of 2026, and those are not West Point cadets. Those are the Army's coming to the expertise that resides at West Point, built the PRO Lab in the basement of Bartlett Hall and said, can you please show us how to implement things like micro-nukes and how to project power in a safe way? And there's a couple of experts who sit at West Point who've been happy to do so. And as the energy demands rise in the age of AI, this work is going to be increasingly of importance for the strategic needs of the Army. Not just for support of the data supports for AI that's going to be necessary to fight and win, but also project power with reduced lines of logistics over the tyranny of distance known as the 6,000 miles of the Pacific.

In the lower-left, you'll see what's called TLAWS, Training for the ethical employment of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems. This is a software-based simulation that West Point cadets and faculty are working on in support of the DEVCOM Armament Center. The software places soldiers in realistic combat scenarios where they must decide where to deploy autonomous mission success, and this has really been incredibly interesting watch the cadets, because they're not limited by the left and right limits. They're not tied into the bureaucracy or what they can and can't do. They just think, why can't we do that? You're like, huh, that is quite interesting. Let's try that.

And the bottom right here captures the incredible intersection of our academic and military training programs. In April 2025, after coming back from SAG-U – and the COM also went – we had a conversation with the Academic Board where we said, hey, we need to start having cadets thinking about drones. They need to start looking up and around. In a very quick manner, 90 days, we ensured that every cadet platoon, cadet field training, had a drone with their formation. Really herculean effort. That was amazing. It was done through the Center of Robotics, Department of Military Instruction, some of the soldiers from the 101st.

The biggest challenge was quite interesting. It wasn't the expertise to build the drones. The cadets knew how to do it. The challenge was we gave them two limitations. Make it as cheap as possible. Make it as fast as possible, and only use U.S. parts. Biggest challenge, U.S. parts – really, really difficult. The cadets were able to make the drones with the Center of Robotics for about \$3,500 a piece, and again, the expertise was there, but they couldn't find the rotorless motors. There isn't like a company. They could not find one, which really started to make us think about the industrial base, and that's one of the benefits of the Innovation Hub. The Innovation Hub starts to pilot things and start to recognize, how do you

scale that? And that's a question that we've really started to think about. Because that kind of integration isn't really a one-off success. It really reflects the direction we're heading. And we started to think about, how do we pilot something? And how, when we pilot it, do we put it into and implement? You can do that at cadet field training, or West Point cadets, but then how do you move it within the next phase, which is the scale, the acquisition process – all the things the Army's working on?

And so we've really started on the expansion of the West Point Werx Innovation Hubs in two ways. Outside of the gate of West Point, there's an old building that's called Spellman Hall. That used to be part of the Ladycliff school there, and it's right by the West Point visitor center and West Point museum. And we are going to renovate about 6,000 square feet of that to really build on the public-private partnerships. Because what we have found is that innovation – which used to happen inside the government. You think about the GPS, the Jeep, the DARPA with the internet. Innovation is now in private industry, and private industry is knocking down the door to partner with the West Point Werx Innovation Hub, in particular, with West Point. And so we recognized we needed a space outside of the gate where we could have these public-private partnership integrations, and we could integrate those efforts. And so that's what Spellman Hall will be. It will create additional room for collaboration with industrial and operational partners.

But the other big expansion is really we recognize the impact of the Innovation Hub and the ability to have an integration with the cadets training and education. So we're moving into the development of the West Point Werx Proving Ground, a state-of-the-art facility designed to test and emerging Army technologies in a realistic operational environment.

West Point is really fascinating. It sits 50 miles from New York City. It's got tens of thousands of acres with some very unique topography. It has mountains. It's got water. It's clearly got snow. It's got lakes. It's got vegetation and seasons. And so if you want to test things, say, directed energy, if you want to test indoor or outdoor or submersible drones, if you want to test counter-UAS, if you want to test any of those things, oftentimes we'll go to a place where it's got a very sanitized environment, like the desert. That isn't really the place to test these technologies, and we've been working in a consortium with Texas A&M and Texas Tech to try to figure out a way to integrate our efforts. And they really are – their researchers are fascinated – by the geography and topography of West Point.

And so this state-of-the-art facility, known as the West Point Werx Proving Ground, allows for a unique place that the Army currently does not have to test this technology, to test all of those emerging techs that are

going to be necessary to fight and win, and you can do it integrated with cadet training, which means you can see at the squad and platoon level. You can do it by building research faculty who give the Army a bench of experts, and you can support some of the Army's bigger efforts that are coming through the relationships with the hub. And as the problems faced in the Army grow more complex, we really recognize the ecosystem to provide those solutions.

Now, just to give you a few examples of how much interest there is in what I'm talking about, this West Point Werx Innovation Hub, it's a win-win-win. You get a sophisticated cadet education, which is the education necessary to fight and win the day, to be able to do that projects-based, experiential-based learning. You get a faculty that are stewarding them, and that faculty then provide the Army a bench of experts that happen to have security clearances, and you're solving a lot of the Army's biggest problems. And like I said, there's interest.

Examples. Palmer Luckey, the CEO of Andruil, will be at West Point March 20th. Interested in seeing what's going on with the West Point Werx Innovation Hub. Detachment 201 is coming to West Point right before Projects Day. If you haven't been to Projects Day – I know many of you have – and you haven't, absolutely come to Projects Day. As R.J., my classmate, mentioned Sandhurst is something different, Projects Day is something quite different. And the Detachment 201 team will be there to really try to see how we can better integrate the West Point academic program into those innovation efforts. And we're also working with JIATF-401, the Department of War's new lead organization for countering small unmanned aircraft systems. In just a few weeks, we'll be hosting the JIATF-401 team at the Innovation Hub.

So much of what I just discussed, a lot of what I've discussed, is only enabled by the Academic Building Upgrade Program, which is our holistic facility modernization. It's ultimately going to transform seven of USMA's buildings. The most impressive, exciting one, of course, is the Goethals Hall. Many of you know it as the Cyber Engineering Academic Center. It is named after the aforementioned George Washington Goethals. This facility is going to be a gamechanger. 150,000 square feet, \$250 million facility, all focused on emerging tech. I've walked around it recently. It will blow you away. It will be the Army's, I would guess, leading facility when it comes to the integration of technology and warfighting. It has gigantic open bays that allow for indoor drone testing, four floors. There are 20-ton cranes that can move things so we can work on hypersonics, because we have a really incredible cadet hypersonic rocket team, and a number of other collaborative spaces that allow for robotics. There's a cyber range. There's a wind tunnel, and there's advanced engineering labs all designed to expose cadets to the technical

realities of the battlefields they'll face.

Occupation of Goethals will enable the Academic building Upgrade Program to shift to its next major phase with the renovation of Thayer Hall. Thanks to both the Army staff, the Secretariat, and all those who have been really setting the conditions for us to break ground in January 2027. The new Thayer Hall is going to be exceptional. It's necessary. The building has not been upgraded since 1958, and again, I'm biased. But as far as I'm concerned, upon completion, it will take its place as the Army's flagship academic building.

Our modernization efforts aren't just limited to facilities. We've created a War Studies program, an Aerospace program, the integration of artificial intelligence. We have tailored our academic curriculum are not only grounded in that timeliness I talked about, those leaders of character, but also those timely aspects, which make them fluid and emerging technologies. And they're going to help us shape and win those conflicts of the future.

I really would say all of this comes down to one thing. It's all about the officers we're sending to the Army, and those officers don't have a choice but to be prepared. And we're going to ensure they are prepared. So let me just give you two examples as I close, of two of these young officers.

I just spoke really about going out to SAG-U. And around that time, one of our recent graduates, Second Lieutenant Kai Youngren, graduated number 1 in his class. He was the highest ranking cadet. He's a Rhodes scholar, and he recently completed his graduate studies. But while studying abroad, he remained deeply engaged with his operational Army. And his work from Oxford was an article published, "From Frontlines to Factories: Embedding Industry in U.S. Army Units to Accelerate Combat Iteration." He offered some concrete recommendations on how to accelerate battlefield innovation. And there were a number of senior leaders, including Gen. Buzzard, who mentioned that his analysis was incredible and was like, I need to talk to you more about this.

And on the flip side, I could talk about Daine Van de Wall, class of 2020. He was our first captain. He was a Rhodes scholar, and after earning his degree in diplomacy and governance, he spent two years serving as an infantry officer. And just recently, was selected for assignment in a special mission unit, one of the most demanding and selective organizations in our Army.

Daine, Kai, they are just small examples. And the Sup talked about a number, and the COM talked about a number. They're the tip of the iceberg. The cadets really are that good, and they really are that driven.

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What motivates me about them isn't their intellect. It's not their physical ability. It's none of that. Their purpose-driven. They want to be part of an ideals-based organization, and they want to go fight and win in their nation's wars. And I'll tell you, that oftentimes it's less and less possible to find somebody who's young who says, put me in. Hey, I want to be – yeah. You want to go? There's a challenge? I'll go. And that's what you're going to find from the cadets at West Point.

So as I look towards the future, I think the challenges that lie ahead, as our cadets graduate and embark on their profession, they're daunting. They really are. And all of us – all of us – have a stake in their success. Not just because we have this connection at West Point. Because really, the future of the entire country depends on it.

The geopolitical reality is stark. I am certain – I am certain – that our cadets will fight in a major war, because history has proven that. It is shown that, if you graduate from West Point and you stay in for what would be a typical career for 20 years, you're going to war. That's a guarantee. They're going to war. And it's likely that this one will be as large a scale as any fight we've seen since World War II. That's okay. That's all right, because they're ready. And they're going to be able to lead through those challenging and difficult circumstances.

The technology revolution that's happening right now, they're ready for. It does mean a new type of warfare, and it's our job to make sure they know how to navigate that warfare. But these future leaders that we're educating and training at West Point are going to be asked to think, innovate, and lead in a highly complex and technical environment. It's up to us to produce that crop of Army leaders who's going to win our next wars. We really don't have time to waste. Our country simply can't afford it.

And so I'm excited that you all are here. I'm exciting for the investment you're making in the country. There's nothing that drives any of us at the academy more than we are laser focused on ensuring that we fight and win our nation's wars. And our cadets that are here today, who will be the officers tomorrow, they will. So thank you.

Chairman? Or I'm happy for any questions.

Chairman Womack: Senator Kaine?

Senator Kaine: Dean, thank you. I'm a member of the Health Education and Labor Pension Committee, and your discussion of the AI 105 and the AI major grabbed my attention. I could see the committee possibly having hearings about the role of AI in higher education, and perhaps a West Pointer should be on the witness panel. But if you could just describe briefly the

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required AI 105 course and the components of the AI major, that would be helpful.

Brig. Gen Reeves: Yes, sir. So there's an interesting historic example. So Pope Urban II – I've told some of you this story before. Pope Urban II, in 1121, recognized that crossbows had become so lethal, and they were upsetting the social hierarchy, he said, I'm banning them. Anyone who uses a crossbow is going to be excommunicated. And so what did everybody do? They all went and got crossbows. They're like, this thing works.

Technology always wins. It always, always wins. Technology always finds its way onto the battlefield. There's been efforts to ban it for years – balloons, airplanes, et cetera. AI is no different. The difference with the AI, sir – and I'm going to get to the AI 105 and the specifics. The difference with AI is it's not really an evolution. It's a revolution. Some would say we've moved to the Age of Enlightenment to the Age of AI, where it's not about the transmission of information in higher education. It's about application. That's why the projects-based learning is so important, the applying of knowledge.

It's really upsetting higher education. The thousand-year model, where subject matter expert came in. You sat there, listened, took notes, went back to your room, studied, and came in and were assessed with a test, that model is really upset. Because a 15-year-old with their phone has as much access to information as the smartest person in the world 60 years ago.

And so AI 105, as well as these other efforts, it's really about teaching the cadets how to integrate AI into the way they approach problem-solving. A lot of it's going to be projects based or hands on. It's also going to be – some of it's going to be a throwback. So things like taking the boards. West Point graduates know about taking the boards. That becomes increasingly relevant. It's like take the board. You show what you know. Oral exams, writing out your tests or exam in a classroom. Homework might not be as important.

So AI 105 has a couple of different parts. One of them is just to teach cadets the systems that are available. And those systems are changing very quickly. There's your Claudes, there's your... I mean, you could just keep going. There's all of those different systems. First off, it's informative. Then the other part is, how do you use AI in a way that enables you to think without your critical thinking skills atrophying. You have to understand a little bit of what's behind AI. Some of the coding that is required.

So the AI 105 course is – and it's given to the plebes intentionally to show them, here's what's available. Here's how it works. Here's how it can be

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used. Here's its limitations. One of the greatest examples I like is we have a prompt, and the cadets will put whatever the prompt may be, and they'll put it into AI. And they'll come out with an answer. And then they go, and they write their answer. And they compare and contrast to see where the hallucinations are, where those aren't. But you're going to start seeing AI start to do a lot of things, I think, in pragmatically to the profession of arms and how we've done things, and more broadly, to society. And so our cadets have to understand how to do it.

I could give you the syllabus, and I could show you the entire course sequence. But it really starts with survey. Understanding the coding that goes behind it, and how it's used in application. And then at the end of the course, the cadets then apply it. And one of the ways they've applied it was they each built a drone.

Chairman Womack: Ms. Bice?

Rep. Bice: Thank you, Dean, for your comments. You mentioned briefly biotech, and I am a commissioner on the National Security Commission on Emerging Biotech, and I think it is often an afterthought. So I want to encourage you to continue to focus on that. Certainly, UAS and counter-UAS are incredibly important, but our adversaries have a whole of government approach to biotechnology and biowarfare, and I don't know that we've paid enough attention to that.

And as we look to the future, you said the fight will be above us, and I think that is true. But it's also going to be something that we can't see or feel, and we need to be mindful of that moving forward.

Brig. Gen Reeves: Yeah, ma'am. Thank you for your comments. I couldn't agree more. We've recently started a bioengineering minor at West Point last year for this very purpose. We recognize that there potentially is a gap in national security perspective on the threat that comes from bioengineering, the weaponization of DNA, and all of those types of threats at both the individual or collective level. And so that's why we started the bioengineering major. And you know who understands it, you know who drives the market, cadets get it. We had our most cadets major for biology this year in history. We had 72 sign up for it. And many of them, if you would ask them why, they see this. They're like, I really want to understand bioengineering and the threat that's coming from – and particularly the combination of biology and technology – how that's working to be weaponized. Yes, ma'am.

Chairman Womack: Pat?

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Rep. Harrigan: Dean, throughout the cadets' course of academic study, what is the relationship – and I should probably say application – of the honor code in a world of artificial intelligence?

Brig. Gen Reeves: Great question. And I'm glad it's the Commandant's job to figure out all things honor things, because it's really hard. The honor code remains consistent and applicable throughout the entire four-year experience. It's a fluid situation with AI, because a firstie thinks about AI different than a plebe. If you talk about societal moments, if you talk to a young person, they're going to tell you September 2023 was a big day when ChatGPT became widely available. So a plebe coming out of high school thinks about AI very differently than a kid getting ready to graduate from West Point just over those four years.

That being said, we've been updating consistently, sometimes every six months, our guidance to cadets in that classroom about artificial intelligence, and it's nuanced. The academic program has embraced artificial intelligence, but there might be circumstances where you're like, you're not going to use AI in this assignment. The cover sheets that many people recognize, the cover sheets now annotate any use of AI. And if you did, how do you cite to it? And then sometimes it's encouraged. We want you to use AI.

I can get it to you if you like, sir. There's a regulation that lays out how honor and AI integrate, how it's applied in the honor proceedings, or in the administration of the honor code. And to some extent, actually, cadets have to take a bit of ownership. Say, hey, your course memo says you can use it here. The professor will reenforce, hey, don't use it here, use it here, here's how you can use it. And it's constantly changing.

So in the past honor code, or the application of it in the academic program, might be updated every few years. We're updating it every semester at this point to ensure that we're integrating AI in a responsible and ethical way, while we're still enforcing not just the honor code, but the cadets' critical thinking skills. But also teaching them how to use it. Yes, sir?

Chairman Womack: Elissa?

Sen. Slotkin: Just a follow-up, same question. Every university I know is struggling with how to integrate or not integrate, how to restrict. Do the professors then have to double-check, do a little testing, on whether someone's using AI for basic homework? Is it purely honor code? Or is there some sort of process?

Brig. Gen Reeves: Ma'am, it's very much focused on a cadet's honor if they did or did not. Oftentimes, it's not that they're lying. It's just how they have been brought

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up that, hey, I just used ChatGPT to come up with this answer. I can't do that? So there's an education component. But there is also programs that lay out and say, hey, has AI been used on this assignment? Those programs, there's a little war. There was a graduate student at Penn who came up with the program to see if AI's been used, and then there's a way to make it more anonymous. So it's a back and forth.

But a lot of times, it's through the faculty member coming to the cadet and saying, hey, did you use it here? We call it "approach for clarification." And they will, oh, yes I did. Or no, I didn't, and then it'll just proceed.

Sen. Slotkin: And can I just ask on the classified AI mission? So there's the use of AI in everything, and then there's the fight that we're in vis-à-vis China to win the classified AI race. Is there any classified research and work that these cadets can do while they're still in school to get them in that conversation, since it's so existential for us to win?

Brig. Gen Reeves: Ma'am, I think that's an incredible salient and relevant point. That's one of the reasons Gen. Gilland has been very focused on things like we need to expand skiff capabilities and classified places at the academy so that we can get the cadets operating on that side of the classified component. I know that we had – there's so many shocking things. It's not classified. I met with the Superintendent of the Taiwanese Military Academy, and we were talking about AI. And he said, you know, Taiwan's getting 4 million attacks a day from the use of AI. And he said, that's become almost like their benchmark. How do we respond to that?

Yes, ma'am. I think we could do more. And I think we do need to do more, which is to get the cadets not just comfortable with AI, but also understanding how it's supplied at the operational level in the classified environment. Yes, ma'am.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: I would say additionally, though, we include top clearance to include cadets that are in certain programs that would allow them to be able to start doing that as a cadet, not just once they graduate and get commission.

The other thing I would offer up is that, before there was AI, the Dean's team across the academy, we use programs to double-check work to see, from a plagiarism perspective and such. That was before AI.

And then as we think about across the academy, it's really about embracing. Shane mentioned it. We embrace AI. AI can be used for all kinds of things. And here's another fact. From an instructor perspective, somebody writes something, if you know what their – I don't want to say history of writing. But you know what one's writing style is. Is this really coming from them? Did they do the research on this, or did somebody

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else? Did they prompt it, and then this is what came out? And the fact is, small classrooms, relationships with instructors, they can see that pretty quickly. And our cadets, for the most part, they get that. They understand that.

And then the last thing I was going to say with regards to the Dean's presentation, as we look at our West Point Werx, the Innovation Hub, and our different initiatives, we are nested with the Army's transformation initiatives from the Secretary and the Chief in working with operational forces around the Western Hemisphere Command. Talking about the 25th Infantry Division, the 101st, 3ID down in Fort Hood with III Armored Corps. We are tied in with all of these different entities, including I think you've probably hit DEVCOM, Army Research Lab, et cetera. So being completely integrated with what our leaders vision as they see the Army transformation initiative. We are in line with that.

Brig. Gen Reeves: Yes, sir, and just to echo that, it's exciting. The Innovation Hub was created to break down the silos. West Point's got a very powerful academic program – 13 departments, 27 centers. But like a lot of higher education or industry, things were looked at myopically through a lens. You're like, you're going to build something that's autonomous? You're going to have to have software. You're going to have to have mechanical engineers. You're also going to have to have an ethicist, maybe someone who understands the history of integrating new weapons, a lawyer. You're going to have to put together a team. And that was the purpose of the innovation hub, was to break down those silos, and to create interdisciplinary teams that work in a cross-functional way to solve these really big problems. And we reached out. We're like, hey, if we're going to do this, let's solve the Army's problems. We're cheap. We got cadets and faculty. Let's go do this.

And so we started to reach out to the Army, and we saw this overwhelming demand from the DEVCOMs, the Army Research Lab, ARO, USASOC, SOCOM. But then we also started to see at the division level – 25th ID, 101st – that their innovation labs, they're like, hey. We could really use some help working on something tactical. Like no problem. We can get some cadets sitting in some basements over there. They're smart. They'll work on it. We'll figure out how to throw a grenade further without anything mechanical. And so we started to work with the innovation labs at the division level. We started to connect to the Army vertically. And then we started to see, oh, this really connects directly with ASA(ALT) and IEE. And then we started to see industry. A lot of the – you have some of your legacy industry. You have some of your newer industry. They're all very interested. So a bit of this – I call it the innovation ecosystem, but West Point has become a little bit of the center of a solar system of loosely-configured organizations that want to

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innovate, and they're connecting to West Point. And of course, I like it, because it facilitates our cadet education. It makes our cadets more sophisticated. It really helps the faculty focus their disciplinary expertise in something the Army and the nation needs. And of course, we'll solving real-world problems. And so it's just like I said, this constant win-win-win.

And if I've been surprised by anything, it's really the interest of industry to partner with West Point. I won't say I didn't see it coming, but I think, sir, we both feel like, wow. It's just a knock on the door constantly. We'd like to partner. We'd like to partner. And so facilitating that has become a really important part. It's been great.

Chairman Womack: Are there any limitations from a facilities, equipment, staffing point of view?

Brig. Gen. Reeves: Sir, I'm so glad you asked that. It's all limitations. I need more people, more buildings, and more money.

Chairman Womack: But be specific.

Brig. Gen. Reeves: Sir, I'm going to be pretty specific here. So again, the Cyber and Engineering Academic Center, Goethals Hall, is going to be a gamechanger. Thayer Hall, critical, absolutely critical. But then those two parts that I discussed about the expansion of the Innovation Hub, the public-private collaborative space out in Spellman Hall. And significantly more important is the West Point Werx Proving Ground that's out in the Buckner area that allows for the indoor-outdoor submersible testing facility, both in terms of whatever the technology could be. It could be drones. It could be counter-UAS. It could be directed energy. It could be a look at radiation.

The thing that makes that really interesting is how West Point's constructed. It has already a lot of 5G towers, which allow you to then gather the data that's being produced in that testing facility. And that data can be applied back to the Army, and then you can start that piloting that accelerates that scaling, as necessary.

So the commitment to the Academic Upgrade Program, absolutely critical. The connection to the facilities out at the West Point Werx Proving Ground, critical. And then it's really the partnerships with a lot of these external bodies that are Army bodies – the DEVCOMs and the others – and those come through what are called the “reimbursable positions,” absolutely critical to maintaining the excellence and the momentum that we've got when it comes to cadets in connection to innovation.

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Chairman Womack: In conversations I've had with cadets of mine, they've always mentioned Wi-Fi as a limitation. Now, that's not necessarily a U.S. Government. It's more of, I guess, an AT&T, Verizon, whatever the providers. I'm curious as to whether or not Starlink will play in that space to benefit cadets. But I understand it's getting better, but it's not optimal, is it?

Brig. Gen. Reeves: I think it is getting better. And I would defer actually to the Sup on this. I think that the limitations in terms of Wi-Fi at West Point are well-known. And that that is a limitation that hurts your ability to do certain things if you don't have the connectivity that's necessary. And I do think that we've improved that dramatically, really, in the last couple of years. But, sir, I defer to you.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yes, that's correct. With partnering, as we look at AT&T, Verizon, commercial entities – and it's not just a West Point thing. It's the region. As we look at saber communications that then extends out into our training grounds, we've had some infrastructure that's been added, which we put it onto the greater West Point reservation in order to increase that. The Wi-Fi specifically, like inside granite buildings, that's just you got to put more little Wi-Fi nodes and so forth. The Starlink piece, what you just mentioned, we haven't gone down that pathway. It's something that we need to look at.

Mr. Fitzgerald: Mr. Chairman, just to that point, as the Supe is mentioning, it's not just the West Point issue. We have thousands of permanent party and transient barracks across CONUS, OCONUS. So then within the last couple weeks, we have started discussions with Starlink to figure out what an enterprise pricing model would look like to solve some of those challenges.

Chairman Womack: Sir?

Mr. Bellavia: Where the rubber hits the road here, though – and correct me, sir, if I'm wrong – but West Point is about 215 megawatts, and you're in need of electricity at West Point. For all these programs, we're seeing all these dynamic men and women, cadets that are doing great things, AI expansion, New York State utilities, we're seeing this across the military – but there's special authority. You have special authority that big Army doesn't have, the white hat of academia, all the different things with the future, especially with technology. Is there a plan? We talked about housing in the last meeting. But critical infrastructure – I mean, the folks that I've been talking to, there could be a need for 800 megawatts, a gigawatt of electricity. We've talked about this bipartisan from the Senate and the House. Is there a plan for autonomous electricity production at a center like ...

Lt. Gen. Gilland: At West Point?

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Participant: ... at West Point?

Lt. Gen. Gilland: I mean, right now, we have had the discussion. We had asked for the small modular reactor to be one of the places with the Army. The Army made decisions to put it elsewhere. I asked for West Point to be in that discussion, given our, I will say, requirements, and then the independent aspect of it. We are reliant upon our local utilities, which is Orange Rockland County Utilities. We've got a 69 kilovolt line that's being put in, but won't be in until probably the end of next year, '27, that will come into West Point.

I looked at the proposal of having a small modular reactor at West Point. Not only would it satisfy our requirements, but then we could also use it in a method of helping others in the region if we have an excess that could be used. Because right now, when you look at it from a requirements perspective, load shedding in the region, particularly in the summer months, significant when the heat's up. Load shedding, we're impacted. We take a hit with regards to what's coming in from a power perspective to the academy.

And I go back to the small modular reactor could absolutely fill that need and give us independence and autonomy.

Mr. Bellavia: With respect, Mr. Chairman, I don't think it's we're asking what I believe – we've heard a lot about this is the greatest institution. This is saving republic, the men and women behind you, go to war with them any day of the week. But we have to do our job. There is no way we can expect our military or the finest academic institutions that are providing the future generals to be dependent on the civilian power grid. Then it's a matter of national security. But also, it limits you. It limits you to expand and be ready for tomorrow's war. The Chinese are 4,000 terawatts of electricity ahead of us as a nation. Our military is 97% dependent, in the CONUS United States, on the civilian power grid. We have one idiot – right-wing, left-wing, domestic, foreign – that shuts that down, where are we? I think that's our number 1 priority, is to say West Point, we're going to continue the move towards technology and developing these minds, but you have to be in control of your own destiny. And whether it's an SMR that we're waiting eight years down the road – I mean, FRC and NRC, they're only provided one certificate per SMR per year. We can't compete with that. That, to me, is unsustainable. Whether it's renewables, or whatever we need to do, West Point has to be in control of their own destiny. We talked about housing and all these other issues that these leaders have to deal with, Mr. Chairman. But this, to me, is the number one pressing issue.

We are developing the best of the best to handle all of our security to save

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this republic, and we are going to stymie the ability to raise those men and women into commissioned officers unless they have the ability to grow and expand. And this is just unsustainable. It has to be a priority.

Chairman Womack: Good points.

Mr. Fitzgerald: Sir, I'll just use that opportunity to point out what we talked about privately before. But the Secretary, I think, recognizes creating resilient microgrids for our installations is a national security priority. And we're going to be going out with an RFI 1 March. The first strategic pillar of that is help us figure out industry. Help us create the models and the financing structures where we can actually implement the structures where we can actually implement behind-the-meter power solutions so that our installations are resilient and have their own energy sources. So thank you for pointing that out.

Participant: Thank you.

Rep. Harrigan: And if I may, in this year's NDAA, we got across the finish line, all of the authorities that West Point, or the Army, or any other military installation needs, to actually put a nuclear reactor on site outside of the regulatory environment that normally exists that prohibits these things from happening, it is solely a funding issue at this point. It's a multi-billion-dollar hole. But if we can solve that problem, everything else is there ready to go.

Mr. Fitzgerald: On the SMRs? Yeah. It's a tech problem too, though.

Chairman Womack: And I would guess then, even then, where does West Point fit in the DA's list of most necessary improvements? Because we have a lot of places, not just CONUS, but elsewhere that lacks efficient energy. Very good. Good points. Thank you, Shane.

Brig. Gen. Reeves: Well, thank you all. Sir, back to you.

Chairman Womack: I want to thank Gen. Gilland and his leader team for the updates and the insights. I show 11:32. At this time, I'm going to just open the floor to the Board on any topics that you think are important for us to address today, open a discussion. I want to be respectful of everyone's time. I know that we're usually out of here by noon, but we will have our discussions in sufficient order so that we can get you out of here at the reasonable time. But at the same time, not leave anything that is important to you uncovered. So I'm just going to throw the floor open. If anybody would like to offer a topic, and then engage in a discussion, let's do that at this time. Anyone? Yes, Sanford?

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Rep. Bishop: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to offer three items I think that may have carried over from – two of them carried over from the last meeting. One having to do with the item of interest that you indicated at the last meeting that you would carry over with respect to diversity, cultural understanding, and military preparedness, and how they work together, leaders who will be able to deal with adversaries that they better understand as a result of having training in social and cultural backgrounds.

The second I think last meeting there was some discussion about the downgrade by the Defense Health Agency of the military hospitals. There are 14 of them, and Keller Army Community Hospital was one of those, and I kind of wanted to find out if there have been any developments in that regard.

And the third item was with respect to the extension of the opportunities for the Army-Navy game to move south of Philadelphia and Maryland, i.e. Atlanta, Georgia.

Chairman Womack: Let's put the third one on the table first, because I think that's pretty quick. There's a broader discussion that's underway, and if Theo wants to talk about it, I would welcome him to address it, about the ongoing efforts perhaps by the NCAA and maybe by CBS to impact the second weekend in December, and the extension of the season, the expansion of the playoff format, and the potential impact it could have on America's game. And I know the President is interested in the issue and may indeed come back with an Executive Order on the subject. I don't know where that stands right now. I think there are some edits being made to some potential comments. But Theo, can you enlighten us a little bit?

Mr. Theodorakis: I'm happy to. So, sir, I said the last two years, you've seen tremendous success with the Army football team, also with the Navy football team. I hate to say that out loud. But for us, the college football playoff is looking to extend, as Congressman Womack said. So what that does is actually potentially has college football playoff games playing in our weekend. So what we're asking for flexibility and the ability to, if this does happen, that we have the ability to move the game and make sure it's on the biggest pedestal, the biggest stage possible. And regards the game's played, we are looking at options. I think there are a lot of inherent hurdles. You do have the Corps of Cadets, you do have the Brigade, that you have to move. Sometimes when you have to do that, Philadelphia is easier as far as bus rides.

But as far as the Army-Navy game, what it means to the United States of America, we're trying to do our best to preserve it. And I think trying to combat what's going on in college athletics, which sometimes is trying to

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take away from these games, like these games which we feel, and the President has been very supportive, what it means to the United States Government.

Rep. Bishop: Is it possible that you have developed some criteria for a location to perhaps put it out for bids, and if various venues could at least be aware of what those are, and be able to make a case for a particular venue consistent with those criteria?

Mr. Theodorakis: Yes, sir. We work closely with the Naval Academy. We will be going out to RFP this summer. So there will be a list of criteria that we'll put out for bid. Very open-minded about what that looks like.

Chairman Womack: But also understanding, I think, sir, CBS, USAA, the Army-Navy Committee isn't just the Navel Academy and the United States Military Academy coming together and saying that. There's a cost aspect. You're putting the Brigade of Mids and the Corps of Cadets on trains and hauling them to wherever we're talking about that's upward of 8,000. Where are we putting them? 40-plus years ago, they all went out to Pasadena, California. That's the model. The fact is, it was a different world. And so when we think about vetting and so forth, where we're going to put cadets and such, the ability, there's a cost aspect specifically. Costs have increased to move that many people, and so forth.

When we think about it, it's not just criteria for the Mercedes Benz dome down there, which is a great facility, but getting all of them there and back and such.

Rep. Bishop: That information is valuable, because I imagine that the owners of the venue and the state would probably create some incentives, offer some things, that would address those. But they just need to know what those requirements are.

Chairman Womack: And then the last thing I would say, we've got to be adaptable with regards to scheduling. Because I do believe that we don't want to get locked into a specific. We want to be able to conclude the season with the Army-Navy classic. I think it's important not only to the institutions, but it's important to our nation. But when is that? Is it Thanksgiving weekend? Is it the first weekend of December, second weekend of December? I think we've got to be able to – the institutions both have to demonstrate adaptability with scheduling. And right now, for Army-Navy '28, '28 and beyond is the next go around, right, Theo?

Mr. Theodorakis: Yes, sir.

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Chairman Womack: '27 is back, well, this year is Met Live. '27 is back to Philly. '28 and beyond is to be determined.

[Crosstalk]

Chairman Womack: On the subject of DHA –

Rep. Ryan: I don't want to cut you off, sir, but just a quick update on our end. I think a really good example of the Board all working together. We flagged this last summer, but there was a threat to close 14 military treatment facilities, including Keller. Everybody, in a bipartisan way and a bicameral way, who worked on NDAA legislation to say no f-ing way are we going to allow that. It passed, and now I think that's strengthened our ability to at least hold the facility. And then you may have more detail on this, Supe, but I know Keller was just recognized nationally for its performance and its outcomes.

Chairman Womack: Yes, sir.

Rep. Ryan: So I think that's a great example of the Board working together and preserving a really critical facility. So I want to thank colleagues for working together on that.

Chairman Womack: We're in a good space right now, particularly with the recognition of Keller top 5 hospital in the category. Of course, working with the Department of Veterans Affairs also as we think about, how do we help Department of Veterans Affairs through a throughput, people that need services that Keller can provide? So it has been a collaborative approach to it, and I think we're – thankfully to the work of many of you – I think we're in a pretty good spot right now.

Rep. Ryan: And, sorry, the Secretary of the Army has been incredible on this. So I want to thank him personally. He said, we're not going to let that happen, and he's been super helpful too.

Chairman Womack: Other questions? Yes, Gen. Flynn?

Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: A couple things just briefly. First, phenomenal updates, Steve. I'm honestly just blown away by some of the stuff that's going on. On the clearance issue, it's interesting. I don't know why a cadet shouldn't graduate from West Point with at least a secret clearance. Some of them should.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: They do, sir.

Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: Do they?

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- Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yes, sir.
- Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: All of them, no problem?
- Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yeah.
- Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: Are there any that have top secret?
- Lt. Gen. Gilland: There are, yes, sir.
- Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: When they become a junior or senior, at a certain point, I guess?
- Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yeah, it's when they become –
- Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: That should be relatively easy to do.
- Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yeah, it's once they're affirmed, and then depending on the –
- Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: Like a degree program, or something like that, especially with this AI stuff? Yeah, okay.
- Lt. Gen. Gilland: What's that?
- Participant: If it's tied to the research.
- Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yeah, and then if there's any research projects that are being done that requires the clearance, then we'll get them submitted, and they'll be able to participate in that.
- Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: Good.
- Participant: Sorry, if I could add, also, when branching comes, we look forward with our MI and our Cyber cadets going into those branches. We start looking at some of those requirements. As you know, sir, some of them are very lengthy to get through. So we aggressively look at requirement going forward to make sure they meet all the demands to their career field.
- Gen. Flynn: Some you want them to show up ready, but even in the operational assignments. Those guys and gals need clearances as well.
- The only other thing I have is there's some discussion about consolidated accreditation amongst the academies. Are you aware of that?
- Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yes, sir.

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Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: Are you?

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yes, sir.

Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: I understand the accreditation process is typically geographically, or by region, or by the big east or whatever the various programs are. Or is there any idea about what that is? Is there a discussion on it, or is it a necessary argument to have so that all the academies fall under one accreditation?

Lt. Gen. Gilland: So accreditation, sir, the accrediting bodies were regionally aligned, and that's been for almost a century. But that's no longer the case. So both Naval Academy and West Point are part of the Middle States body, accrediting body. And then Air Force was at the Western States or the Western –

[Crosstalk]

Lt. Gen. Gilland: What's that?

Participant: [Inaudible]

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yeah. So they're part of a different one, but there's no regional – I mean there's no requirement to have a regional alignment.

Sir, you're very familiar with this. As we look at the accrediting for Middle States, there were requirements within their standards and goals that had been laid out with regards to DEI. When the Administration a year ago established Executive Orders, the Middle States accrediting body did not require us to meet those respective standards and goals. They waived them. And given their current language for their standards and goals, all of the language with regards to DEI has been removed from their respective standards and goals that they have in order to assess the different institutions.

When we look at from accreditation of which accreditation is – I mean, that's what's behind when we think about the degrees.

Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: I guess my point is that the academies have a – and you guys have talked about it in various briefings today. There's a set of values and standards that are different and an expected level of standard, that's different than any university out there. So it just seemed to me like there's an academic accreditation. But then is there a consistency of values and standards across the academies? Because I don't know. I don't know. I haven't looked at that kind of level of detail. Because all of it should be higher than any other university that's out there. So is there – are we meeting an

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expectation of a regional accreditation process, or should we have something that's higher?

Lt. Gen. Gilland: I would say we're leading the way in the accreditation process. I mean, from our academy, and also the Naval Academy, that we both belong to Middle States. But we also have ABET for engineering accreditation that exists also that we're part of. And I would submit that we're leading the way on that.

Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: Are you aware of it at all, at the Secretary's level?

Mr. Fitzgerald: Essentially just what the Supe spoke to. And so I think, sir, it may be two separate issues going here. One is the accreditation piece, which is just so that when you graduate, it's not just a piece of paper. It's got an accreditation behind it. And so that's what I think the Supe is speaking to with the Middle States and the criteria that they have and being compliant. It sounds like you may be speaking to more the ethical additional self-imposed standards that we need to hold ourselves to to ensure order.

Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: Yes. I think the idea is that these academies, really, they're hallmarks of inspiration for the nation, really. And so it's like the academic criteria, it's almost given what we have to achieve, and then we want to raise that standard as much as we can, meeting whatever the criteria is. But it just seems to me like there could be a consolidated view of all the academies, all of them, not just the Navy and Air Force and West Point, but all of them.

Mr. Fitzgerald: I mean, within the Department of War, I know there's been a focus on an approach across all the academies. But I think that would probably come out of PMR more than something... So I don't know if there's been discussions amongst the leadership of the academies, but I know the Department, writ large, has been focused on this issue across all three of the academies. Yes, sir.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: And we're fully aware of the conversations and providing various inputs to it, sir.

Ms. Bannon: Mr. Chairman, I have a question for the Supe.

Chairman Womack: Maureen, yes?

Ms. Bannon: Last briefing, you talked about the buildings, and funding for the buildings. It was not addressed in this meeting at all. And the Dean brought up Thayer Hall. We don't want to be a year, two years behind. You start Thayer Hall, and then you're two years behind. What has

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happened with the allocation for funding to finish those buildings you've already started, and the plan for Thayer Hall?

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yes, well, the reason why we didn't address it was because we felt like eight months ago we really gave you everything we had on that. With regards to the current construction that's ongoing and that, we work with the Army, the Corps of Engineers, in order to make sure that, if we have to go back and get more funding, that we're able to do that. And that's the process that we're undergoing.

With regards to Thayer Hall itself, we've gone through a demolition charrette and a design charrette. The design being about a 10% completion rate from what a structure would look like. And then with regards to talking with IE&E, specifically the Department of the Army and the resourcing for that, that they are working on as we look at building out the resourcing from a financial perspective, starting with '27 with demolition money that we've already received. And then moving forward, which I think it will probably be a 5-, 6-year project to be able to build it, to lay out that funding, and secure it.

Ms. Bannon: So the question was also brought up to the Representative from the Secretary of the Army last meeting? Where did the money and the funding go to? Where was it reallocated it to? And why isn't West Point – because it was also brought up that donors and wealthy alumni should be paying for the construction, which is not the case. The United States Government should be. So I don't believe that it was brought back to the Department of the Army from the previous Representative at the meeting where that money was reallocated to, and why we're a year or two years behind.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Sir, if I may, ma'am, when you say that the money was not reallocated –

Ms. Bannon: No, you said that funding had – I believe you said funding had been reallocated, or the building was a year or two behind because of funding. So the question was then brought up to the Representative from the Secretary of the Army, if that was the case, where did the funding get reallocated to?

Lt. Gen. Gilland: We had proposed within the FIP, so the Facilities Infrastructure Program for the Army, we had proposed that the Thayer Hall would go into that through a programming perspective from the Army starting in like '29, '30. So there has never been funds dedicated.

Ms. Bannon: This wasn't for Thayer Hall. This was for the barracks for the soldiers, that the then enlisted soldiers were living in, that was running behind schedule. And then the renovation of barracks buildings for cadets,

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because you had multiple cadets in other barracks rooms piling on top of each other.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yes, increased usage and so forth.

Ms. Bannon: So that's where that was.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yes. Soldier barracks 620, 624, and CSM – let me make sure this is straight. 624 has just been –

CSM Barretto: April, sir.

CSM Barretto: Yes, 624, the soldier barracks, ma'am, is coming back in April. It was supposed to be online in February. We had some equipment issues, HVAC. So now it's online to get back up in April. And 620 is coming online in August.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: So we got the money for that. There's some long lead parts that were part of that. Now, with regards to our Ridgway and Sherman barracks, which is the two barracks that have been undergoing renovations, and had some unforeseen site conditions and such. I mean, Rich Gash, where you at? Can you help me and speaking to that briefly here?

Col. Gash: Yes, sir. So we're not at funding problems with those cadet barracks right now. It's more so USMA's execution timeline issues. We're getting the above threshold funds request through the Army, and it's just a matter of processing those for those two cadet barracks.

Chairman Womack: So just normal military construction that are [Crosstalk] – yeah.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: That are slow and cumbersome, but it's part of the process.

Chairman Womack: But if you go back, say, a decade, maybe a little longer than a decade, and you look at the allocations and the add-ons over time to the United States Military Academy, it's pretty impressive what the U.S. Government has done on our campus versus what they've done at Annapolis and Colorado Springs when you look at the money that went into the housing programs, the barracks program, barracks update in the length of time. And that was a combination, I guess, of MILCON and FSRM.

Participant: Yes.

Chairman Womack: Several different pieces to it. And then you look at some of the new construction to include a \$250 million CEAC facility. And the other proposed academic building upgrades and so forth, we have made up quite a bit of lost time on this institution.

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Lt. Gen. Gilland: And we're trying to accelerate when we talk about Thayer Hall. I'm going, after this, to the building to talk specifically Thayer Hall and how the Army has been supportive of an acceleration of Thayer, which then in turn – we've got to be able to set the conditions in order to essentially evacuate Thayer. Take everything out of it so it can be demoed, and then the construction process, which would start more than likely in the '28 time frame, '28 into '29 is where I think that would be, starting with demolition really next year in '27. But the demolition will probably be a 12- to 18-month process to demo it, haul everything out, and then set the site conditions in order to start building just because of the scale of it. And I'm not a civil engineer, so that's the extent of it that I can offer up. But the team is on it, and working with the Army specifically. IE&E, I'm going to see Mr. Gillis this afternoon.

Chairman Womack: Other questions? Pat?

Rep. Harrigan: Sup, I've had the privilege of getting down to Fort Briggs twice in the last two weeks, once with the President and Sec War, and then another time just this past Saturday. And I'd heard from a couple grads, and I just kind of wanted to confirm or deny. Was infantry a forced branch this year, i.e. you had to dip into your number two choices to push folks into that branch? Is that a true story?

Lt. Gen. Gilland: I thought that we actually increased the last – the bottom 10 were BRADSO is that right, something like that?

Participant: I think so.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Or 12.

Brig. Gen. Garcia: I guess, sir, the question – and we get like forced branching a lot. And so it's important to realize that the branching model is changed since you or I went through, and many others, right? So one, cadets interview with a branch, and the branch gets a vote. So you may say I want to be an infantryman, and the infantry center goes, your PT scores aren't good enough to be in our branch, and they may get their second or third choice that they competed for. There are usually about 99% of the cadets get their top 3 to 5 choice, and they compete like every other cadet. And anybody outside of the top 5, generally when we go back and dig, and I personally dig with the MI6, hey, what happened? The cadet put down one branch, and they didn't even interview with it. And we go, okay, hey. You got to take ownership of your future. We can only do so much for you.

We don't look at that as forced branching. Everybody has an opportunity to go to a branch, develop a portfolio to apply to that branch, and do well.

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Do they all get their top choice? No. There's only so many numbers, and so some people get their second or third choice.

Rep. Harrigan: I appreciate that explanation. And I guess the perspective that I'm coming from is infantry was always filled up with folks that wanted that as their number 1 choice. That's the warrior ethos. That's why generally you're going to West Point. And it sounds like maybe now you're kind of digging into second or third choice, folks gets pushed into infantry.

Brig. Gen. Garcia: No, I wouldn't say that, sir, at all. I'll see if I got the stats, but we have not put anybody in the infantry that basically didn't want to be in the infantry.

Rep. Harrigan: Right. But again, I didn't want to, and I didn't mean to, be negative with my comment to the Supe that post-night was rough for me.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: No.

Rep. Harrigan: It was just a continuation of my West Point education, and I got to learn about what the term "needs of the Army" meant. But coming back to the branch, that branch is very important, and it just kind of – if you have folks that are getting infantry where that's their second, or third, or fourth, or fifth choice, I get it. 95% are getting their top five choice. But specifically with infantry, it seems like maybe the Corps is kind of moving in a softer direction would be my concern. So did you have folks that got branched infantry that infantry was their second, third, fourth, or fifth choice?

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yes. Particularly in the past years, yes. Definitely, sir.

Brig. Gen Garcia: So we can definitely get the stats. Right now what I got is 223 infantry officers for the class of '26. Thirty-two of those are branch details. So they're going to go do infantry, and then go into a branch where they use those skills to expand and support the infantry. I'd have to figure out exactly where that ranked for each one.

I do that one of the other measures, which is another side of it, is they were all most preferred by the infantry. And so what we look also very hard it, to my earlier point, is we really get concerned when we have someone who doesn't get something, and the branch doesn't want them either. So we have this marriage of nobody wants anybody. So we got to do that. So to be frank with you, Armor has been a branch we've had some concerns. And when that happens, we work very hard to cross the enterprise, working with ROTC, we get their data. Okay, did you have this? And can we swap the slots to get the best officer to the best branch to serve the best way possible?

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And the way we've done that, as an example, my first year was field artillery slots. ROTC didn't want them. They had a mismatch, and so we swapped armor for field artillery. It still allowed us to meet the Army requirement given to us, which is 80% usually about, give or take, a few percentage points a year. I have to go combat arms or multidomain. But I'll take that as an RFI, sir, so I have the exact data for you.

Rep. Harrigan: Yeah, and I think my question would be, Supe, do you have any long-term concerns that these hard combat arms branches aren't getting selected by folks as their number 1 choice? Usually, historically, number 1 choices would be pushing out everybody else for that. That would be my longer-term trend concern.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: As stated by R.J., the trend is in Armor branch. That's where we've seen – and I wouldn't put it in terms of softer or harder. I would classify it more as what's desired and such. And so we look at the armor force specifically, and this has been over the past few years. Cadets are looking and saying, hey, is that where I want to go to, as we look at what the armor force is going to look like and such? I think that's where you see the respective trending.

The other is our requirements have expanded for some of these other branches, though, too. And when we think about the traditional, I'll say the combat arms, but when we put it in the operational, it's in the operations branches. So your infantry, armor, artillery, aviation, air defense artillery – I'm trying to think. I think that's all of those. Again, we're required by the Army to put 80% — well, a percentage. We've got 80% of this last class who went in it.

Chairman Womack: Other questions?

Brig. Gen. Garcia: I'm sorry, just a quick follow-up. The network worked very well here. The internet is working well. We have quick, on-the-spot responses. We've actually turned a few people down from going into infantry. They wanted it. There weren't enough slots I guess is the way I should break it down for you. I think part of the system helps identify issues like that. If you are a cadet, but put infantry last, and then infantry looks, says, well, you're least preferred. You don't want to be here. We don't want you. So naturally, by working the system, we can look at the data and make sure we're putting the right people in the right place as opposed to the old model, which was, number 1, you get what you want. And it worked. It didn't take into account any of what the Army was looking for and trying to match their –

Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: You're bringing up a great point. It's just another day for another discussion. But the Werx thing that you were talking about, branches, we go with branches based on the last 100 years, right? I mean, you could

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have a branch that's robotics. You could have a branch that's artificial intelligence. You could have a branch that's whatever. We really, really have to talk about innovating and thinking differently, because as David said about the Chinese. What we're facing against the Chinese, it's incredible. It's just incredible the kind of stuff that they're doing.

So when we think about our conventional sort of make up, I think we really have to think even differently. And actually, you guys are the ones that have to do it for us. Because you're going to get it out ROTC and other places, and all these geniuses that are in the military that will think differently too. But the type of – you might have said it, Steve. The type of people we are bringing through our education system, like elementary, secondary, and then into a place like West Point, it's a completely different makeup of people, culture, demographics. So we have to really be thinking about, when you look at the warfare that we are involved in, you got to kind of prepare for the here and now, but also the future is really what West Point and the other academies, I think, have always done for the country. And so I just – don't get locked into the branches. That would be my counsel, because it's like, oh, you're going to go intel, you're going to go fire, sport, or you're going to go engineer or whatever. For now, that's what we have. But you guys are the ones that I think need to be thinking about what should the future look like? Because you're in that middle point where you're taking a young person off the street and then turning them into a leader for the future. And what's the kind of stuff that we're – Christ. You see all these people that are doing all this innovative stuff. I mean, you can have a – we're going to be training humans to be platoon leaders for robot platoons pretty soon.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Which is why the public-private partnerships that we talked about, that the Dean talked about, is so critical as we go forward bringing people in from industry, different sectors that come in, and get exposed, not only to the academy. See what we're doing there, what our cadets and our faculty are doing also. And really, how do we get collaborative and work together in meeting the Army's report?

Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: I don't know if you all have seen the photo, or the video, actually the video, of the guy from the Mexican cartel. Have you seen this in the last 72 hours with this guy that was killed down there? Have you seen them, the video of the cartel? Have you seen it?

Mr. Fitzgerald: I've seen a lot of videos in the last 72 hours from Mexico. You may need to be a little more specific.

Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: Well, this guy is outfitted better than a Delta Force operator. I mean, the kit, the kind of gear that they had. You can just look at it, and they're on there on video. And he's talking about what they're going to do. I mean, I

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always get scared when we talk about biological weapons. But the kind of capability that is available to an adversary –

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Off the shelf, yes, sir.

Lt. Gen. (R) Flynn: It's incredible. I just think we have to be very innovative, and I think that's my expectation. It's these academies have to do that, and they have to be the ones that are fighting the system at the Secretary level, or the Congressional level, or in the center, wherever. Hey, we need the money to do this kind of stuff, because it's so important – so important.

Chairman Womack: Sanford?

Rep. Bishop: Yeah, I just want a different subject going back to one of the items that we discussed the last meeting. It has to do with morale and welfare. We talked about the extracurricular clubs that had been terminated, and I understand that there's been some new developments consistent with what the Executive Orders that have been made, and those clubs, some of them, have been allowed to reapply.

Chairman Womack: What's the status on that, Supe?

Lt. Gen. Gilland: There's no change from last summer with regards to the clubs that we laid out. We executed, in accordance with the Executive Orders, sir, there were a number of clubs, as we laid out. I think there were 12 clubs that were not in accordance with the Executive Order, and they were eliminated. And then we also offer a 100-plus other extracurricular activities, clubs, that others can participate in of their choosing to their interest.

Rep. Bishop: So there's no change?

Lt. Gen. Gilland: No, sir.

Chairman Womack: Meaghan?

Brig. Gen. Garcia: As well as no change in the sense that none others have been disbanded.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: That's correct. Yes, sir.

Dr. Mobbs: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we've had a lot of discussion around innovation, in particular, and I'm sure many of us saw that, in a recent NATO operation, Operation Hedgehog, 10 Ukrainians with drones took out two NATO battalions, or brigades – but I think it was two NATO battalions. And so this is a conversation I've had with uniform leadership.

I remain confused as to why Ukraine is not on the list of approved

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international partners to send cadets to West Point. And so I would like to begin having the discussion publicly about this requires not just a decision by West Point. This requires cooperation with Department of War, and also Department of State in order for that to be authorized. But as we're thinking about burden sharing in Europe in particular, this would make sense for us to begin having these discussions publicly to have an exchange of Ukrainian cadets coming to West Point.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Last year, NDAA, ma'am, expanded from 60 to 80 –

Dr. Mobbs: International spots, okay.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: – international on the four-year program specifically. I think that I understand completely Ukrainian cadets coming to the academy. We do have a number of relationships and initiatives, though, with not only U.S. forces, but with the Ukrainians in partnership, like I was discussing earlier. I don't know. Admissions-wise, is there any – has anybody approached you about Ukrainian cadets specifically?

Col. Lee: No, sir. But it's a Department of War decision.

Dr. Mobbs: It's a DOW decision, required also by State as well.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yeah, it's a DOW security cooperation.

Dr. Mobbs: Yeah. And it requires, I think, initially by the Defense Attache in Kyiv, who supports this. And next, goes to Grynkewich at EUCOM also supports this. So I think the holdup potentially is just maybe DOW not being quite aware of this desire for this happen. So perhaps something that can be discussed.

I also happen to concurrently sit on the Board at the Virginia Military Institute, and I don't want them to have Ukrainian cadets before we do here at West Point as a graduate. So they're in the process of doing that, so I'd like to see West Point perhaps beat them to that punch.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Fair enough. I think India ought to be in there too.

Participant: I agree.

Dr. Mobbs: I agree.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: I mean, if we're going to – so when you talk about it, it's not just specific. There are a number of –

Dr. Mobbs: There are a number of them.

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Lt. Gen. Gilland: – strategic partners as we think about long-term national security strategy and such.

Dr. Mobbs: And especially if we expanded the slots by 20, I think that we should be having a discussion about what makes sense for us to do that.

Lt. Gen. Gilland: Yes. Yes, ma'am. Agree.

Chairman Womack: Other questions? Other comments? I know the hour is long. It's 12:10.

Gen. Gilland, I want to thank you for your command group for – I consider this to be one of our better meetings from a couple of standpoints. One, the content, but also the participation today. We have all of our member, except two, that are here today, and that is a credit to everybody here. But to all of your team, I want to thank you for the great updates and the leadership of this national treasure we know as West Point.

As far as a date for our next meeting, we're working with the academy and the congressional calendar to set a date and communicate that with the Board members. That is due out to you. We'll get that to you as soon as we can, and I don't know of – does anybody else have anything else they need to offer before I ask for a motion to adjourn? Hearing none, is there a motion to adjourn?

Rep. Ryan: So moved.

Chairman Womack: Is there a second?

Dr. Mobbs: Second.

Chairman Womack: Very good. A second being heard, the February 2026 meeting of the United States Military Academy Board of Visitors is hereby adjourned. Thank you, and safe travels.