

National Football League (NFL) High School Player Development Program

What is it?

The ARNG partners with the National Football League (NFL) by sponsoring the High School Player Development Program (HSPD). The HSPD provides high school students (sophomores through seniors) a program of character development and training in football skills. The intent is to equip participants with the skills and tools needed to achieve success both on and off the field. The program consists of being the presenting sponsor of a high school program that helps reach students across the country. The NFL and ARNG offer the program to every high school in the U.S. that has a football team. The FY11 program involved 162 camps in 37 states and the District of Columbia, reaching over 40,000 students. Recruiters and Soldiers attend each camp in order to interact with the students in a non-military setting.

The NFL HSPD culminates in a national 7-on-7 football tournament where the ARNG has high visibility throughout the event. In 2011, the NFL HSPD program was attended by 25,000 high school football players. To date, over 4,000 attendees have expressed an interest in ARNG programs and opportunities. The HSPD program provides the ARNG a productive vehicle to reach a diverse audience while allowing the Guard to showcase a strong community commitment. To be a football player, one must demonstrate loyalty, duty, respect, and personal courage, as well as understand the importance of teamwork. These same qualities are essential to success in the ARNG and resonate with Army values. The HSPD program promotes these shared values with an emphasis on character development in a positive environment while promoting the National Guard.

What continued efforts does ARNG have planned for the future?

In 2012, the ARNG wants to increase the number of outreach events conducted with high school football coaches, and have that outreach begin earlier than in previous years. The rationale is that more and earlier promotion from the NFL about the program (and the ARNG's role in it) will allow coaches to take better advantage of the program and give the ARNG more time to promote the programs in high schools in advance of the registration period. Additionally, the ARNG plans to increase the number of workshops offered to at least 240, providing greater opportunities for student-athlete participation.

Why is this important to ARNG?

The HSPD program provides the ARNG a productive vehicle to reach a diverse audience while allowing the Guard to showcase a strong community commitment. To be a football player, one must demonstrate loyalty, duty, respect, and personal courage and understand the importance of teamwork. These same qualities are essential to success in the ARNG and resonate with Army values. The ARNG/NFL HSPD partnership promotes these shared values with an emphasis on character development in a positive environment while promoting the National Guard. Additionally, as of December 2011, over 4,000 attendees have expressed interest in ARNG programs and opportunities as a result of their participation in the HSPD program.