

Life at the Naval Academy



It would be impossible to predict what four years at the Naval Academy would be like for you personally, but we can describe our philosophy, our curriculum and the daily life you can expect. Only after you've experienced the exhausting rigors of Plebe Summer, and after you have faced the responsibility of leading other midshipmen and after you have thrown your hat into the air at graduation will you really know what the Naval Academy experience is all about. Make no mistake: the four years at Annapolis are very challenging, tightly structured, and designed to push you well beyond your perceived limits.

In this section, we will give you a general description of life at the Naval Academy. Later chapters give you the details of the academic, athletic and professional training programs.

Definitions

Let's start with a few basics. On your first day at the Academy, you begin learning a whole new vocabulary of naval terms. Before long, the floor is 'the deck,' the wall is 'the bulkhead' and the restroom is 'the head.' Likewise, midshipmen seniority is stated in a way different from traditional college terms.

All Naval Academy students, men and women, are called midshipmen, which is a rank between chief warrant officer and ensign in the Navy. A midshipman first class is a senior or "firstie." The student body is the Brigade of Midshipmen, or simply 'the Brigade,' and the naval service often is called 'the Fleet.' The Brigade is divided into six battalions. Five companies make up each battalion, making a total of 30 companies. The midshipman command structure is headed by a first class midshipman, chosen for outstanding leadership performance to be Brigade Commander. He or she is responsible for much of the Brigade's day-to-day activities as well as the professional training of other midshipmen. Overseeing all Brigade activities is the Commandant of Midshipmen, an active-duty Navy or Marine Corps senior officer. Working for the Commandant, experienced Navy and Marine Corps officers and senior enlisted lead the companies and battalions.

Living with Honor

The Honor Concept of the Brigade of Midshipmen was established by midshipmen to urge everyone to carry out their duties with the highest sense of personal integrity and honor. It represents the minimum standard that midshipmen are expected to follow. Honor, integrity, and loyalty to the service, its customs, and its traditions, are fundamental characteristics essential to a successful naval officer. Lying, cheating, and stealing are intolerable in the brigade as in the Fleet, and may be cause for separation from the Naval Academy. The emphasis is on "doing what is right" rather than simply not breaking the rules.

Any healthy organization can survive individual divergencies, and may even profit from them. Compulsory unification of opinion can only achieve the unanimity of the graveyard.

—ADMIRAL HYMAN
RICKOVER, CLASS OF 1922

Midshipmen live and work in a safe and positive environment where teamwork and mutual respect are emphasized.



To underscore their commitment to living a life of honor, midshipmen developed and implemented a living document known as the Honor Treatise of the Brigade of Midshipmen. The Treatise is a positive and uplifting statement directly from the midshipmen expressing who they are and what they are striving to achieve. It establishes the common goals and ideals which midshipmen envision for themselves at the Naval Academy as well as in the Fleet. The Honor Concept and Honor Treatise are the Brigade's way of preparing midshipmen for a life of honorable service to their country.

Life in the Brigade

No matter what your background, chances are the living arrangements at the Academy are different from anything you have experienced. The day begins with reveille and ends with "lights out." You stand watches, march to meals and wear uniforms for almost everything you do. You and your roommates must keep your room ready for a military inspection at any time and keep your uniforms in regulation condition. Demerits are awarded for a room or uniform that is not in proper order, or "squared away."

All midshipmen live in Bancroft Hall, a huge dormitory complex. You and your roommates live in close proximity to about 150 other midshipmen in your company. Men and women midshipmen from all four classes make up each company. Each company has its own area called the "wardroom" for meetings and recreation. Midshipmen rooms are wired for Internet access, closed circuit TV and telephones.



COMMANDANT OF MIDSHIPMEN

Captain Robert E. Clark II, the 84th Commandant of Midshipmen, graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1984. He is a career Submarine Officer whose command tours include Commanding Officer, USS Connecticut (SSN 22) and Commodore, Submarine Squadron FOUR. He holds a bachelor of science degree in engineering from the U.S. Naval Academy and a master of science degree in National Security Affairs from the Naval Postgraduate School. As Commandant of Midshipmen, he oversees the professional development and day-to-day lives of the Brigade of Midshipmen.



“The Naval Academy will provide you with a distinguished academic education, superior athletic opportunities and an unparalleled character and leadership development experience. We will provide you the foundation and all the necessary tools to lead the men and women of our future Navy and Marine Corps team, while at the same time carrying on a proud tradition of leadership and honorable service to our great nation.

As a midshipman, you will be held to the highest standard of conduct, honor and integrity in every aspect of your daily life. You will develop morally, mentally and physically, and be exposed to a focused leadership environment that only the Naval Academy can provide. Your summers will be spent in various locations around the world, gaining experience in the fleet with our Navy and Marine Corps team. Whether you are traversing the ocean depths in a nuclear-powered submarine, flying off of an aircraft carrier, steaming across the seven seas on a surface warship, or serving in the field with our Marines, you will experience firsthand the exciting opportunities that await you upon graduation and commissioning.

The Naval Academy is a unique experience that will develop and ultimately test your honor, courage and commitment. The challenge is great but the opportunities are limitless. We invite you to accept this journey and improve your life and that of your country.”

The company is the most important unit of the more than 4,400-member Brigade of Midshipmen. Many of your most rewarding experiences at the Naval Academy are those you share with members of your company. You eat, sleep, study, drill, play and compete as teams with your company mates. You learn to trust and rely on each other. The company experience also gives you an idea of how things work in the Navy and Marine Corps, where small-unit cohesion, teamwork and morale are as important in peacetime operations as in combat. Each semester, companies compete for the title, ‘Color Company,’ the best in the Brigade. The semester-long color competition among the 30 companies is one way company spirit is built. Companies accumulate points for academic, professional and intramural excellence. The two companies with the most points for each semester are recognized at the Color Parade during Commissioning Week and then enjoy special privileges for the next year, including the honor of representing the Naval Academy at official functions such as presidential inaugurations.





Plebe Summer

All midshipmen begin the four-year program with Plebe Summer, a period designed to turn civilians into midshipmen. Plebe Summer is no gentle easing into the military routine. Soon after entering the gate on Induction Day, you are put into uniform and taught how to salute by the first class midshipmen who lead the plebe indoctrination program. For the next seven weeks, you start your days at dawn with an hour of rigorous exercise and end them long after sunset, wondering how you will make it through the next day. Forget television, leisure time or movies. You will have barely enough hours in the day to finish your assigned plebe tasks!

The frantic, exhausting pace of Plebe Summer leads you somewhere. It gets you ready for your responsibilities when the Brigade returns from summer training and the academic year begins. The summer also builds the foundation for the tangible and intangible qualities that make an outstanding naval officer. You learn self-discipline. You learn to organize your time and decide which things are most important. You reach top physical condition. You develop your ability to think clearly under stress and to react quickly when the unexpected comes your way. Any officer who has stood the watch on the bridge of a ship in a storm or landed a jet on the deck of an aircraft carrier at night can tell you the importance of these qualities.

“I wouldn’t give up plebe summer for anything in the world. I formed relationships and friendships for the rest of my life.”

MIDSHIPMAN CHELSEA WRIGHT, CLASS OF 2010

Plebe Summer introduces you to naval service fundamentals as well. Aboard Naval Academy sailboats, you learn to respect the power of wind and current. You learn the basics of seamanship, navigation and boat handling. On the weapons range, you learn how to fire small arms safely and accurately. You also learn why we have high standards of honor, character and conduct. And, you begin to develop your own ideas about leadership and the techniques that will make you an effective leader.

Academic Year

When the upperclassmen return to the Academy in late August to begin the academic year, you begin a routine that becomes very familiar during your four years. A typical weekday schedule looks something like this:

5:30 a.m.	Earliest rising time for Plebes
6:30 a.m.	Reveille (all hands out of bed)
6:30 - 7:00 a.m.	Instruction period -Company Officer
7:00 a.m.	Morning quarters formation
7:15 a.m.	Morning meal
7:55 - 11:45 a.m.	Academic Classes
12:05 p.m.	Noon meal formation
12:10 p.m.	Noon meal
12:50 - 1:20 p.m.	Instruction Period
1:30 - 3:30 p.m.	Academic Classes
3:45 - 6:00 p.m.	Physical Mission (drill, varsity and intramural sports)
6:30 - 7:15 p.m.	Evening formation and meal
8:00 - 11:00 p.m.	Study period
11:00 p.m.	Taps for plebes
Midnight	Taps for all other midshipmen

When you add to this schedule the time required for military duties, inspection preparation and extra academic instruction, you can see the demands on your time are considerable.



Leadership Responsibility

As you progress through the years at the Academy, leadership responsibilities grow. Each year, you and your classmates assume more important roles in running your company, your battalion and the Brigade. By the time you are a first class midshipman, you are making daily decisions affecting the morale and performance of other midshipmen. You are teaching them the fundamentals of the naval profession and helping them through difficulties. You are leading through personal example, ability, authority and techniques you learned in the classroom and through three years experience. Your leadership responsibilities also increase in summer professional training, from learning to appreciate sailors doing “youngster” cruise, to gaining a basic understanding of all warfare areas and the careers behind them before junior year, and finally, developing junior officer leadership qualities during the summer as you head into your final academic year.

You build your leadership skills in these and other settings, where you can learn from mistakes and benefit from the guidance of seasoned officers and senior enlisted. By the time you take your position as a naval officer responsible for leading Sailors and Marines, you have had practical leadership experience and in developing teamwork to accomplish goals and objectives.

Spiritual Opportunities

The Naval Academy’s Religious Ministries Program fosters spiritual fitness and promotes the moral development of midshipmen within the context of an individual’s personal faith and spiritual community. The Chaplain Center serves the religious and spiritual needs of the Brigade by ministering to midshipmen through spiritual and religious mentoring, ritual and sacramental opportunities and by providing pastoral care for all, regardless of faith.

The Academy embraces freedom of religion in all that we do. This means allowing midshipmen to worship, or not, as they desire -- while placing no requirements on midshipmen to embrace specific beliefs or participate in particular religious events. At the same time we provide support for a wide variety of religious practices so those midshipmen who desire to worship are free and able to do so for their own personal development.

While attendance at religious services is voluntary, midshipmen are reminded that as officers of the naval service, their personal beliefs will often be tested, and that in time of stress their subordinates may look to them for spiritual, as well as professional guidance. The Naval Academy has long understood that future officers owe it to themselves and to those they will lead to gain insights into moral, ethical and spiritual dimensions of military leadership. Further, we train midshipmen to understand the responsibilities they will have as officers in ensuring religious support for their sailors and Marines, no matter the nature of their own beliefs. Not only do we want midshipmen and young officers to respect the beliefs and practices of those who follow a different religion or hold beliefs different from their own, we want them to understand and embrace their need as officers to ensure their sailors and Marines can attend services and receive religious support aboard ship or on the battlefield.



Recreation

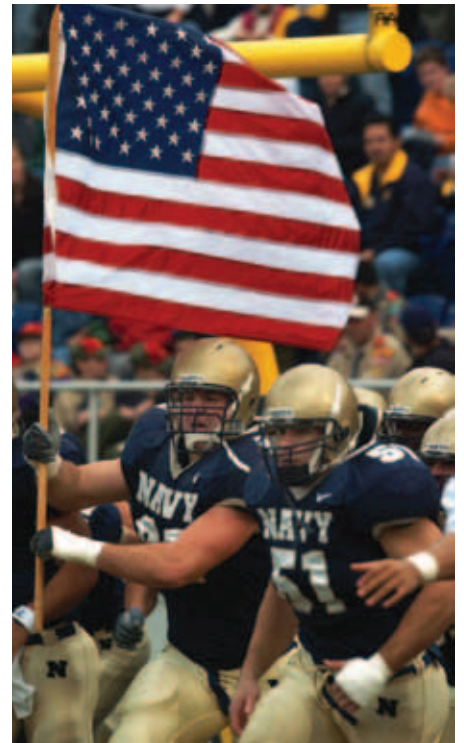
All midshipmen are encouraged to take part in one of the Academy's many clubs and extracurricular activities. For plebes especially, these activities help to relieve the stress of academics and the tough military routine. After plebe year, your free time increases. You may relax, pursue personal interests, date and explore the local area. There's much to see and do in Annapolis, Baltimore and Washington, D.C. There also are many cultural, social and sports activities sponsored by the Academy.

Spectator Sports

On autumn weekends, the excitement and color of Navy football sweeps the Brigade. All midshipmen attend home games in the nearby Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. The football season ends with the entire brigade cheering on the team in the traditional Army-Navy game. There are 31 other varsity Navy teams to support on as well. Outstanding spectator facilities bring out enthusiastic Navy supporters for almost every rivalry, from wrestling and swimming to lacrosse, basketball, soccer and baseball. There is also a full program of club sports which provide an opportunity for non-varsity athletes to participate in intercollegiate sports, and a robust intramurals program which allows midshipman to compete within the Brigade.

Plebe Sponsor Program

During Plebe Summer, every midshipman is offered the opportunity to be introduced to an Annapolis-area family that has volunteered to host midshipmen for dinners, local sightseeing, recreation and simple relaxation away from the demands of the Yard. Many sponsor relationships last long beyond the Academy years.



Social Events

The Brigade Activities Committee plans several special weekends during the year, including events such as the annual International Ball with young guests from foreign embassies in Washington, D.C. Midshipmen groups also plan and participate in theatrical events, concerts and dinners. Senior naval officers join midshipmen regularly for traditional dinners, featuring formal rules of order, toasts, skits and other good-natured activities. Individual companies of midshipmen often organize their own special activities on weekends. Certainly the highlight of the social calendar is Commissioning Week in May—a week of dances, garden parties, parades, concerts and a Blue Angels flight demonstration all culminating in graduation and commissioning of the senior class.

Cultural Affairs Program

Midshipmen can take advantage of our proximity to Washington, D.C. and Baltimore to arrange tickets and transportation to cultural events. Plays, symphonies, operas and ballets at Washington's Kennedy Center and other theatres are open to midshipmen from all classes.

With the Bob Hope Performing Arts Center at Alumni Hall, the Naval Academy is able to provide a wide variety of theatrical and concert events. The Distinguished Artists Series, which presents performers of international renown, is the centerpiece of the program. Productions and musicals by the midshipmen theatrical group known as Masqueraders, Glee Club concerts, chapel organ recitals, music concerts, Naval Academy Band concerts and chamber music recitals round out the action-packed year of events on the Yard. Many other cultural activities, including poetry readings and lectures by leading American authors, are offered at the Academy.

“The Naval Academy is a great atmosphere. I've made a lot of good friends and built a lot of great relationships. It's been wonderful working with people who are so dedicated and professional.”

- MIDSHIPMAN
ZAKARY JAMES BISHOP,
CLASS OF 2011

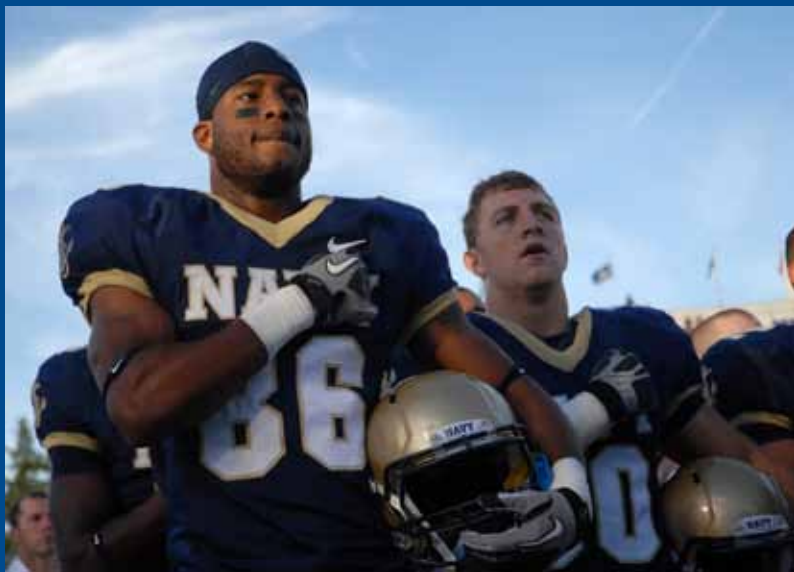


Extracurricular Activities

Even with a demanding academic and athletic schedule, midshipmen have time for extracurricular activities (ECAs). The following are some of the Naval Academy's current ECAs.

Adventure Racing Team	High Power Rifle Team	Phi Alpha Theta
Alliance Linking Leaders and Education in the Services	Infantry Skills Team	Phi Kappa Phi
Alpine Ski Team	Instrumental Ensemble	Pi Tau Sigma
Amateur Radio Club	International Midshipmen Club	Pipes & Drums
American Institute of Aeronautics	Investment Club	Pi Tau Sigma
American Nuclear Society	Italian-American Midshipmen Club	Protestant Choir
Art Club	Japanese American Club	Protestant Midshipmen Club
Association of Computing Machinery	Jewish Midshipmen Club	Radio Station (WRNV)
Astronomy Club	Joy Bright Hancock Group	Rock Climbing Club
Baptist Campus Ministries	Korean-American Midshipmen Association	Russian Studies Club
Bill the Goat (Two-legged)	<i>Labyrinth</i>	Scuba Club
Black Studies Club	Latin American Studies Club	Semper Fidelis
Campus Crusade for Christ	Latter Day Saints Club	Silent Drill Team
Cannoneers	<i>Lucky Bag</i> (yearbook)	Socratic Society
Catholic Chapel Choir	Martial Arts Club	Special Operations Team
Catholic Midshipmen Club	Maritime Engineering Club	Surface Navy Association
Catholic Daughters of America	Masqueraders	Tau Beta Pi
Cheerleaders	Math Club	Team Bill
Chinese American Club	Men's Glee Club	Team Philo
Combat Arms Team	Men's Lacrosse	<i>The Log</i> Magazine
Dance Club	Men's Soccer	Trap and Skeet
Debate Team	Middle Eastern Studies Association	Trident Brass
Dolphin Club	Midshipman Action Group	Ultimate Frisbee Team
Drum & Bugle Corps	Midshipman Black Studies Club	USNA Knights of Columbus
Engineers without Borders	Model United Nations	Upsilon Pi Epsilon
Etta Kappa Nu	Muslim Midshipmen Club	VT-NA
Fellowship of Christian Athletes	National Eagle Scout Association	Water Polo
Fencing Club	National Society of Black Engineers	Women's Glee Club
Field Hockey	Naval Academy Aviation Squadron	Women's Ice Hockey
Filipino American Club	Naval Academy Foreign Affairs Conference	YP Squadron
French Club	Naval Academy Winter Musical	
German Club	Navigators	
Glee Club Musical	Oceanography Club	
Golden Key National Honor Society	Officers' Christian Fellowship	
Gospel Choir	One in Four	
Halloween Concert	Omicron Delta Epsilon	
	Parachute Team	







Local and Area Attractions

The Naval Academy adjoins historic downtown Annapolis, which is famous for its state capitol, colonial homes and waterfront. The city dock is the focal point of the Annapolis waterfront. Workboats outfitted for harvesting crabs and oysters berth next to million-dollar sailing yachts and power boats. During mild weather, the dock is the scene of concerts, boat shows and festivals mixing midshipmen and local citizens with thousands of tourists. For a small city, Annapolis is very sophisticated, offering many fine restaurants, boutiques, art galleries, museums, a repertory theater and a symphony orchestra. Several large shopping centers and malls are located in the suburbs.

Maryland's largest city, Baltimore, is approximately 30 miles from Annapolis. Baltimore's Inner Harbor offers a wide variety of specialty shops, eateries and entertainment. The Maryland Science Center and the National Aquarium are also there. Greater Baltimore also has theatres, galleries, museums and a zoo. For sports enthusiasts, a professional indoor soccer team, the Orioles baseball team and the Ravens football team provide sports excitement.

Due west of Annapolis lies Washington, D.C., our nation's capital. Washington is home to the Smithsonian Institution with its museums of Natural History, National Gallery of Art, American History and Air and Space. There are hundreds of other attractions ranging from art galleries, symphonies, opera, ballet and off-Broadway theatre to rock and jazz concerts, ethnic festivals and scenic parks. Washington also has its share of professional sports teams including the Redskins in football, the Nationals in baseball, the Wizards in basketball and the Capitals in ice hockey.



Midshipmen Pay and Benefits

The Navy pays for the tuition, room and board, medical and dental care of Naval Academy midshipmen. You also enjoy regular active-duty benefits including access to military commissaries and exchanges, commercial transportation and lodging discounts and the ability to fly space-available in military aircraft around the world. Midshipmen pay is \$974.40 monthly, from which laundry, barber, cobbler, activities fees, yearbook and other service charges are deducted. Actual cash pay is \$100 per month your first year, which increases each year thereafter.

Leave and Privileges

The Naval Academy's combined academic, military and physical development programs demand a lot of effort, requiring you to spend more time on campus than the typical civilian college student. But midshipmen enjoy traditional holiday season and summer vacations (leave) plus shorter periods of time off (liberty). Free time to be away from the Academy is based in large part on assigned military responsibilities, performance in academic and military endeavors and class seniority. All midshipmen generally are granted leave during these periods:

- Thanksgiving leave;
- an end-of-semester leave during the holiday season;
- mid-term leave during spring semester;
- a short liberty period at the end of spring semester and before Commissioning Week;
- three weeks of summer vacation

During semesters of the academic year, off-campus privileges fall into two categories: town liberty and weekend liberty. Weekend liberty permits you to take an overnight away from the Academy during the weekend, returning before the Sunday evening meal. You are not eligible for weekend liberty if you are assigned a military duty/watch (rotated responsibilities) or if you are having serious difficulty in academics, conduct or military performance. Town liberty curfews differ according to seniority. Generally, town and weekend liberty is authorized for midshipmen as follows:

- Plebes have town liberty on Saturdays (noon to midnight) and yard liberty within the Naval Academy complex on Sundays.



- Town liberty is granted for upperclass midshipmen in accordance with class weekends.
- A limited number of overnight weekends are granted to upperclass midshipmen based upon class.

Motor Vehicles

Restrictions apply to your use of motor vehicles as a midshipman. This is necessary because parking space is very limited at the Academy and in Annapolis. Also, you have limited time off in the first years to make use of a private vehicle. These are the current rules:

- Third-class midshipmen and plebes are not permitted to operate motor vehicles except when authorized leave.
- Second-class midshipmen may have a car but must maintain and operate it beyond Academy grounds.
- First-class midshipmen may drive a car in Annapolis and on the Naval Academy.
- No midshipman is allowed to maintain or operate a motorcycle.

Alcohol and Drugs

As a future naval officer, you are expected to not abuse alcohol and to shun illegal drugs entirely. Plebes, regardless of age, are not allowed to consume alcoholic beverages. As an upperclass midshipman, you may drink if you are the minimum legal age for drinking (21 in Maryland). The use of illegal drugs (to include ‘designer drugs’ such as ‘spice’, as well as using drugs that are prescribed to another person) is strictly forbidden and results in expulsion from the Academy. As a midshipman, you are subject to random drug testing through urinalysis, consistent with Navy-wide policies and procedures.

Prevention and Deterrence of Sexual Harassment and Assault

The Naval Academy does not tolerate sexual harassment or assault. Academy staff and faculty seek to provide the safest possible learning environment for midshipmen by maintaining a professional command climate that promotes dignity and respect. Our goal is to prevent sexual harassment and assault from occurring through comprehensive education and awareness training. The Academy programs are dynamic, proactive and consistent with those in the Fleet and Marine Corps.

The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program provides training to midshipmen through an extensive four-year curriculum that covers a broad range of topics such as: date rape awareness, prevention and intervention. Midshipmen are also educated on victim support, victim’s rights, and the medical and legal aspects of sexual assault cases. Various guest lecturers, specializing in the topic of sexual assault awareness and deterrence, provide further education throughout each year. Midshipmen are expected to exercise responsibility in preventing and deterring unacceptable behavior from occurring, and to conduct themselves as officers.

In the rare event that an incident does occur, the Academy has created an environment that encourages victims to come forward by providing multiple paths of reporting, with twenty-four hour on-call support, prompt response to allegations, and immediate protection for the victim. Key members of the Naval Academy’s staff ensure the sensitive, coordinated and effective handling of a sexual assault case, including referral to a victim advocate, counseling, and medical services. All allegations are thoroughly investigated and perpetrators are held accountable, under due process afforded by the Uniform Code of Military Justice.



Services

Almost everything you need as a midshipman is available on the Academy grounds. There's a bookstore, uniform and tailor shop, cobbler shop, snack bar, barber/beauty shop, post office and recreation rooms. We also provide the following services:

Dining

The entire brigade eats at one time in a 55,000-square-foot dining area or wardroom, King Hall. Companies sit together, and food is served family-style during the week. Other meals are served buffet style, or on weekends, in a newly constructed servery which is similar to a commercial food court. King Hall offers a wide variety of healthy choices to ensure midshipmen have the proper sustenance for their high metabolisms. All of the food for the 13,500 meals served daily is prepared by our food service staff in the kitchens adjacent to King Hall.

Medical Care

Modern facilities for medical treatment are conveniently located. Besides routine medical treatment, orthopedics/sports medicine, podiatry, physical therapy, preventive medicine and optometry services are available. Specialists in gynecology, dermatology, neurology, cardiology and urology schedule visits to the Academy. Consultation and treatment in all major medical and surgical specialties, including inpatient care, is available at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda. Most emergency conditions are handled at nearby Anne Arundel Medical Center, a fully accredited civilian facility in Annapolis.

Dental Care

Comprehensive oral health care is provided by the Dental Clinic conveniently located in Bancroft Hall. The professional staff provides the full range of dental hygiene and general dentistry treatment. The specialties of Oral Surgery, Orthodontics (limited), Endodontics, Periodontics and Prosthodontics are also available.

Midshipmen Development Center

A wide variety of training, educational and clinical services are provided to promote and enhance the adjustment, well-being, and professional development of midshipmen. This includes confidential individual and group psychological counseling, as well as nutritional consultation and counseling. Stress management and relaxation tools such as biofeedback, and somatron and shiatsu massage chairs are also available on-site.

Legal Assistance

The Office of Legal Counsel is available to assist midshipmen with personal and military legal questions.

Financial Advice

Regular seminars offer information on savings, loans, insurance programs, investment opportunities and tax returns. Individual financial counseling is available from a Navy officer who serves as midshipmen financial advisor.



"The Sea Trials are tough, endurance-wise, but with everyone working together, you don't really think about it. It's a tough first year, but I got through it and I can't complain."

- MIDSHIPMAN ERIC BRUGLER,
CLASS OF 2011



