



UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY  
FOUNDATION

## **Plebe Parent Survival Guide**

### **WELCOME ABOARD!**

Congratulations and welcome to the United States Naval Academy family! When your sons and daughters enter the Naval Academy they become active duty members of the United States Navy. They are taking the first steps toward joining the greatest naval service in the world and becoming its future leaders.

As parents, you have every reason to be proud! The Academy develops leaders of character to serve the country for a lifetime. The active duty service obligation is five years after graduation, but whether your son or daughter remains in uniform for a career or selects some other field of endeavor, he or she will always be recognized as a Naval Academy graduate and leader of character.

Sending a son or daughter to the Naval Academy is exciting, yet quite different from sending them to any other college or university. The phone calls parents receive from a new plebe are not the same kind of phone call that parents receive from other college students. Sometimes, new midshipmen can become discouraged and lose their self confidence. Being the parent of a midshipman often demands considerable time, patience and most importantly moral support.

This handbook has been written with the help of parents who have already been through the same situations. With four exciting years ahead of you in the Naval Academy family, you definitely want to make the most of it. We hope this handbook will help!

### **A Word About USNA Parents Clubs**

Parent Clubs offer a wonderful source of support and encouragement -- particularly for the parents of a new plebe. After your son or daughter has survived plebe Summer, you will probably begin to feel more comfortable about your midshipman and can begin to really enjoy the pride you feel

having a him/her at the Academy. What better way to share these experiences than with other parents who feel the same way?

There are now over 80 Clubs, some of which are joint service academy clubs, across the continental United States, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. At the request of the Superintendent of the Naval Academy, the Naval Academy Alumni Association & Foundation provides services to Parents' Clubs. Jill Montone is the Parent Program Coordinator, 410-295-4016 or [jill.montone@usna.com](mailto:jill.montone@usna.com).

## **The Sponsor Program**

Sponsor families play a vital and important role in helping plebes get through their first year at the Academy. Whether plebes simply "crash" at their sponsor homes for a nap and dinner occasionally, or participate in all the sponsor family activities, having a local place to relax and be among friends is a great stress-reliever. Sponsor "moms" may cook for their mids and are generally very willing to shuttle them to and from the Academy as needed. Just remind your mids that proper etiquette and manners still apply. Mids should give their sponsors notice when they would like to visit, offer to help with the housework if appropriate and keep good lines of communication open. Many midshipmen stay with their sponsor families the entire time they are at USNA, and become a valuable member of the "family". For more information about the USNA Sponsor Program please contact Ms. Rose Clark at 410-293-7030 or by email at [rclark@usna.edu](mailto:rclark@usna.edu).

## **INDUCTION DAY (I-Day)**

- Make hotel reservations in Annapolis as early as possible (see [Corporate Members page](#) for hotels under "PARENTS"). Not only for I-Day but also Plebe Parent Weekend in August. Annapolis & Anne Arundel Co. Visitors Guide is an excellent source for hotels or restaurants and other attractions that are an easy drive to the Academy. Make the trip to Annapolis for induction a family trip with all brothers and sisters going along to show support for your new midshipman.
- Make travel plans to arrive in Annapolis the day before Induction day. Travel so that you can arrive in Annapolis in early afternoon to get settled and relax in the hotel room (see [Corporate Members page](#) for hotels under "PARENTS").
- Dinner in Annapolis on Thursday night before induction day is crowded at most local restaurants there. You might want to travel to Baltimore

and eat at one of many fine restaurants. This will be the last time you can easily travel outside the USNA restricted 22-mile radius to Baltimore with your plebe for dinner.

- Plan on having an early dinner so that you can get back to the hotel room and secure a good night's rest. Spend the evening with family reflecting on past times and things that will go on at home while your plebe is away. Spend time encouraging your plebe. Remember the apprehension they are having at this time. Be sure to set the hotel's alarm clock and also put in for a wake up call so you don't oversleep. Most report times are early in the morning. You do not want to be late!!
- Once your plebe leaves you, they are issued summer working white uniforms and all personal clothing and items are taken and later returned. Large amounts of money are not needed because they will not have time to buy items at the Mid Store.
- It is usually very hot and humid during June in Annapolis! You will be outside almost all day so please remember to bring bottled water, sunscreen and an umbrella. Wear very comfortable shoes. Check the weather forecast - sudden thunderstorms are possible.
- Bring cameras and video recorders. Have another family take group pictures of your family while waiting in line at Alumni Hall.
- After your plebe enters Alumni Hall, you will not be with them again until after the Induction (Oath of Office) Ceremony that evening. Closed circuit television cameras are set up in the barbershop. Television monitors are located in Dahlgren Hall showing closed circuit television and also Naval Academy videos. Breakfast is available in the Dry Dock Restaurant in Dahlgren Hall after 6 a.m.
- The Naval Academy Alumni Association & Foundation sponsors the Plebe Class "Welcome Aboard" luncheon. This is an opportunity for the Alumni Association & Foundation to welcome your family to the Naval Academy, and for you to chat with the Superintendent, Commandant, USNA staff and several parent clubs. Plan on attending.
- The Mid Store is open to parents during I-Day weekend. This is only one of several times that parents can shop unescorted in the Mid Store without your plebe, so take full advantage of the opportunity. A full line of clothing, shoes, books, jewelry, school supplies, foods, and Naval Academy gear is available. All are offered at great prices without

sales tax. Most major credit cards are accepted at the Mid Store. Purchase your own copy of "Reef Points" so you can see what your plebe is memorizing. Be sure to get to the mid-store early to purchase t-shirts with your Plebe's Class Year. The shirts sell out very quickly. You may also want to buy two or three extra "blue-rim" T-shirts to send to your plebe during Plebe Summer.

- During the day, walk around the Yard and visit the Chapel, Museum (Preble Hall), and the Visitor's Center. There are many things to see on the yard. If you are lucky, you may catch a glimpse of your plebe in one of the courtyards and areas around Bancroft Hall. Make no attempt to distract them during this time, as they will be memorizing portions of "Reef Points" and carrying out the orders of their upper class midshipmen detailers.
- The gift shop in the Visitor's Center has a full line of Naval Academy clothing, gifts, and memorabilia; also see [www.navygear.com](http://www.navygear.com) and [www.navalandyachtinguniforms.com](http://www.navalandyachtinguniforms.com), [www.festivalatriva.com](http://www.festivalatriva.com) and [www.starbucks.com](http://www.starbucks.com).
- Don't miss the Induction Ceremony and Oath of Office that is at 6:00 pm. Seating for families is very limited around T-Court. Seats begin to be taken in the afternoon. We suggest that you find a good place to stand and watch with an unobstructed view of the ceremony. Bring camera and video recorders.
- After the Induction Ceremony, you will have 10-15 minutes to spend with your new plebe on Stribling Walk. Ask your plebe to tell you what he or she did during the day. Take plenty of pictures. Remember, this will be your last visit until plebe Parent's Weekend, six weeks away.
- After the Induction Ceremony is over, Annapolis and area restaurants are very crowded. Reservations are a must when eating in Annapolis on Friday night.
- Remember! Plebe Parent Weekend is Only Six Weeks Away!

## **PLEBE SUMMER**

What is Plebe Summer? It is a demanding, fast-paced orientation that launches the four years of preparation for commissioning as Navy or Marine Corp officers. Physical and mental demands on the plebes' time seem never ending, but they all have a purpose: the development of leadership ability, motivation, moral strength, physical skills and stamina – attributes of any

outstanding naval officer. Although some form of military training is found at many American universities, the rigorous routine and challenges of a year-long plebe development system are unique to the service academies. Completing other phases of midshipmen training and education, the plebe year at the United States Naval Academy is designed to test and develop.

### **How To Help Your Plebe Prepare**

- Both parents and plebes should carefully read the "Important Information" document contained in the Permit to Report packet mailed to all new appointees in mid-April. This is the most important preparation guideline for Induction Day (I-Day) and Plebe Summer available. Refer to it often! This document can also be located on-line at on the Academy's site (PDF file - requires Adobe Acrobat).
- Read "Brief Points" - an almanac for Parents and Friends of U.S. Naval Academy Midshipmen from the Naval Institute Press by Ross Mackenzie, which provides basic information in good, clear language. To order a copy or for further information about joining the U.S. Naval Institute, please call or write U.S. Naval Institute, 291 Wood Road, Annapolis, MD 21402-5035, (800) 233-8764.
- Encourage your son/daughter to run every single day! Running every day will help him or her handle the physical regimen of Plebe Summer. Make sure your plebe has comfortable sneakers.
- Only pack the items designated within the Permit to Report Package. Plebes are not allowed to keep anything personal.
- Your plebe needs a reliable wristwatch to stay on schedule.
- Make sure your plebe has a civilian passport. This passport is valid for 10 years. Midshipmen travel for both recreation and overseas cruises and they will need it.
- Make an effort to spend a lot of time with your son or daughter before I-Day. Treasure every moment with them. Your love and support will carry them through the challenging days ahead!
- Remember! Approximately 90% of all plebes meet the demands of Plebe Summer!

- Send letters or postcards by mail often. Tell your plebe how things are going, and reassure him or her that everything is fine at home. Express encouragement to your plebe at all times.
- Encourage other members of your family to write often to your plebe. Aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins, and even friends can write expressing encouragement to your plebe.
- If you travel while your plebe is away, send postcards as often as possible.
- Send care packages often. Snack foods are best. Lunch snacks such as tuna or chicken packages are good along with Rice Krispy treats. We do not recommend sending perishable foods or lots of candy. Remember, they are training physically every day, so too many sweets are not good. Remember also when sending care packages; food items in the care packages are usually shared by your plebe's shipmates and also by his squad leaders. Send enough items to be shared with 4 or 5 people. Shout, Clorox Wipes, foot powder, and spray sunscreen are other good items for a care package. Also see [www.graulsmarket.com](http://www.graulsmarket.com) for custom packages.
- Send postage stamps or pre-paid postage envelopes and post cards. Pre-address the envelopes to family and friends you think your plebe may want to write. Send paper and pens just in case they are not issued these items. However, remember their personal time is limited, so do not be disappointed if regular, "newsy" letters are not forthcoming.
- If you have not already done so, send a pre-paid phone card so your plebe can use it when they are allowed to call home.
- You will be notified as to the date and approximate time your plebe will call home for the first time. Be at home during this time so you will not miss this very important call. Let your plebe do most of the talking during the first few calls, unless he wants to know things about home. Your plebe will only have about a minute, or possibly two, to speak with you the first time he calls.
- Sign up for call forwarding service on your home phone so that you will not miss a phone call from your plebe. While out, forward your home calls to a cell phone.

- Ask your plebe what he needs during Plebe Summer, and include it in his next care package. Tell your plebe each time you send a care package, so he'll make sure to pick it up if not delivered.
- Mid-June, you will receive your plebes' address in a letter from the Officer in Charge of the Class Regiment. It will be in this form:

MIDN First Name Last Name  
 Class of 2008 \* Company \* Platoon  
 P.O. Box \*\*\*\*\*  
 Annapolis, MD 21412

- Use this address throughout Plebe Summer and then drop the Platoon number and change the Company letter designation to the appropriate number. During the summer the plebes are in lettered companies. When the brigade reforms in August, their platoon number becomes their company number. They keep the same box number for four years at USNA.
- Do not travel to Annapolis to see your plebe during Plebe Summer. You will not be able to speak with them on the Yard if you go to Annapolis. Wait until plebe Parent's Weekend.
- Encourage, encourage, encourage!!! Encourage your plebe to finish Plebe Summer. Tell your plebe over and over how proud you are of them every time you speak by telephone. Remind your plebe and yourself that there will be low times, but there is a purpose and a plan to what they are doing, and they will be better for it. Plebe Summer is only six weeks long!

## **PLEBE PARENT WEEKEND**

Plebe Parent Weekend is a must attend event! If you can travel to Annapolis only once, and must choose between I-Day and Plebe Parent Weekend, please make an effort to attend the latter. Although juggling work schedules and personal finances can be intimidating, no parent or family member should miss this opportunity to be with his or her plebe.

- Get reservations as early as possible (see [Corporate Members page](#) for hotels under "PARENTS"). Annapolis & Anne Arundel Co. Visitors Guide is an excellent source for hotels or restaurants and other attractions that are an easy drive to the Academy (remember the restricted 22-mile radius.)

- Plan to arrive in Annapolis on Thursday afternoon. Registration will take place at Alumni Hall or Dahlgren Hall (check the Schedule of Events for exact location). The Academy and the Alumni Association & Foundation set up exhibits on the arena floor in Dahlgren Hall. View exhibits on Thursday if possible, because you will not have time on Friday or during the remainder of the weekend. The exhibits are interesting and a lot of information is available about the Academy and other midshipmen services.
- Don't miss PEP (Physical Exercise Program) on Friday morning. PEP begins at 6:00 a.m. The gates open at 6:00 a.m. Bring cameras and video recorders in case you can find your plebe. PEP formation on the field is by company, so you should be able to locate the approximate position of your plebe's company as they come onto the field.
- Dahlgren Hall is open for breakfast following PEP. You can also buy food Gift Certificates at the restaurant.
- Attend the Commandant's Welcome on Friday morning. After the welcome, take the opportunity to meet with the Company officers and Plebe Summer Staff. Listen to comments from these individuals and ask questions. Be sure to thank these individuals for spending a part of their summer with your plebe.
- The Mid Store is open for shopping. Pick up things you didn't buy during Induction Day weekend. You can also buy a printer for your plebe's computer at the Mid Store. A good supply of printers is usually on hand during the day on Saturday. Prior to buying a printer, you may want to have your mid check with his or her roommates to see if they already own a printer. It is a good idea to have three roommates share one printer. One midshipman buys the printer, and the other two share the costs of the supplies, i.e. print cartridges and paper. Most printers are gone from the Mid Store by Sunday.
- Saturday at the dress parade find out if any parents around you have a plebe in the same Company as your plebe; try to get their e-mail address.
- After noon formation on Friday, leave the yard for a nice lunch. Midshipmen are given Town Liberty (22-mile radius) for the remainder of the day on Friday, and must return to the Academy by 12:00 midnight.

- Go back to your hotel room for the afternoon. Bring swim trunks for a dip in the hotel pool. Have drinks and snacks on hand to munch on during the afternoon.
- Do whatever your plebe wants to do while he/she is with you. Remember, they have just completed six solid weeks of having to follow orders and will be exhausted. This is the first time he can really relax. Do not be surprised if your plebe just wants to sleep instead of participating in an activity.
- Dinner on Friday may be in King Hall with your plebe if tickets are arranged beforehand. Most plebes will want to get away from the Academy during this time, so do not be surprised if they do not want to dine in King Hall. Make a dinner reservation because Annapolis will be very crowded on this weekend. Remember that parking around Annapolis is difficult. There are several public parking decks.
- Town Liberty on Friday is usually over at 12:00 midnight. Your plebe should know for sure. Traffic is very bad! Leave the hotel in plenty of time to get your plebe back to the Academy before Town Liberty expires. Try using Gate 8 instead of Gate 1.
- Do not miss the formal parade Saturday morning on Worden Field. Go early to get a good seat. Bring cameras and video recorders. The parade is a very emotional and moving event. Get to know other parents by asking them to tell you of experiences they have had with their plebes over the summer.
- Attend the Superintendent's Parent's Forum and reception. This is a good chance to meet the Academy Administrators and to ask questions.
- The Reaffirmation Ceremony is designed to reaffirm the commitment made six weeks earlier, after the rigors and training of Plebe Summer have developed a new reality and understanding for the incoming class. This commitment to the Extended Brigade is even more important when accompanied by members of the Naval Academy class that graduated 50 years before.
- Bring detergent, bleach and quarters for the laundromat. Also, bring an iron, ironing board and fan for your plebe (keep the receipt in case the roommates duplicate). These items will be needed in each room and they are sometimes hard to find in Annapolis on PPW.

- Visit your plebe's room in Bancroft Hall during visiting hours on Saturday afternoon. This will be one of only two times that you will ever be permitted into Bancroft Hall. Take pictures of the room and roommates for your album and other family members. Take the opportunity during this visit to meet with the squad leaders, the detailers, and other company leaders. Believe it or not, the summer detailers are also going through an exhausting summer. They are up before and in bed after the plebes; and they do much of the same physical training.
- Town Liberty on Saturday is usually over at 12:00 midnight. Traffic is very bad! Leave the hotel in plenty of time to get your plebe back to the Academy before Town Liberty expires. Try using Gate 8 instead of Gate 1.
- On Sunday, church worship services are available at various locations at the Academy. Religious services and locations are listed on the PPW schedule.
- The Officers and Faculty Club is open for Sunday Brunch. The Club is open to parents of midshipmen while their sons and daughters are attending the Naval Academy. Reservations for the Brunch must be made beforehand. (Telephone: 410-263-8280 or 410-293-2611)

## **ACADEMIC YEAR**

Academics are the key to a Midshipman's success, especially since everything is based on merit (80% academic and 20% military performance). Studies are very demanding, and after getting A's in high school, getting a D or failing an exam at the Academy can be quite a shock. Choosing a major for which one has a passion is very important, one that helps your Midshipmen stay motivated even while studying long hours and on weekends.

If your plebe can validate a course during Plebe Summer, he or she will be able to move ahead or take more advanced courses. All Midshipmen are assigned academic counselors who will help them select the best course offerings. Towards the end of the plebe year, each plebe makes a selection from one of eighteen majors with the help of his academic and military advisors.

The Naval Academy is a concentrated four-year program, and falling behind academically is not an option. It is nearly impossible to catch up. A minimum course load is 15 hours per semester and a 2.0 CQPR (Cumulative Quality

Point Rating) is required to graduate. Moreover, the Academy does not waste its time with anyone that fails due to a lack of effort. The Academic Board meets every semester and reviews individual records of those who have done poorly during the previous semester. The Board looks at all aspects of the Midshipman's record and decides whether to separate him from the Academy. Some courses may be available during Summer School for make-up and/or enrichment, but for many, it is too little, too late. Extra Instruction (EI) is available to all Midshipmen if they simply ask or seek out the help. It is generally said that everyone who receives an appointment should be able to conquer the academics if they really try, and the professors and officers want to help everyone succeed. Small classes are a definite learning advantage, but if you go to class unprepared, your lack of preparedness will not go unnoticed.

During plebe year, nearly all courses are required. The required courses form the foundation for the more advanced courses chosen by the upper class Midshipmen. Some core requirements in the upper class years have alternative courses from which to choose, depending upon the academic background, abilities, and major. The Catalog gives a detailed description of the coursework.

The typical academic schedule for plebes includes five courses in each of two semesters:

First Semester: Calculus I  
(16 credit hours) Chemistry I (Including Labs)  
U.S. Government & Constitutional Development  
Leadership I  
Rhetoric & Introduction to Literature I

Second Semester: Calculus II  
(18 credit hours) Chemistry II  
American Naval Heritage  
Fundamentals of Naval Science  
Rhetoric & Introduction to Literature II

Extracurricular activities are required of all Midshipmen. There are over 75 extracurricular activities available to Midshipmen. Every Midshipman should be able to find something of interest. The activities range from scuba diving to photography, and rock bands and chapel choirs. While many activities are geared to academic interest, others are just for fun.

## **During the Academic Year**

1. Continue sending care packages to your plebe. Remember our Corporate Members (see them on usnaparents.com under "Parents"); go to [www.graulsmarket.com](http://www.graulsmarket.com) for custom packages.

2. You are encouraged to visit your plebe as often as you like. Frequency of visits to the Academy should be determined based on his or her needs during the academic year. Every plebe enjoys having some free time on the weekends. There is a strict schedule of Liberty (time-off) for each class and this varies with each new academic year. Special extras can be given when Navy beats Army in a major sport.

**Yard Liberty:** When Yard Liberty is granted, midshipmen are authorized to visit specified areas or places within the Yard, plus Perry Circle, quarters on Country Road near Perry Circle, Arundel Estates Officers' Quarters, authorized sailing areas, and the USNA Golf Course. Midshipmen must wear the uniform of the day during Yard Liberty, unless participating in athletic events.

**Town Liberty:** When Town Liberty is granted, Midshipmen are authorized to visit areas outside the Naval Academy grounds, but must remain within the 22-Mile Limit. Town Liberty does not extend overnight, and Midshipmen must return to the Academy prior to expiration of Liberty. Midshipmen must wear the uniform of the day during Town Liberty.

**Weekend Leave (Overnight):** plebes are not entitled to Weekend Leave, unless authorized under special circumstances by the Commandant or Superintendent.

Prior to visiting your plebe, have them obtain a permission "chit" so they can travel outside the 22-mile radius of the Academy for dinner or sightseeing. Remember, they cannot stay with you at a local hotel during your visit. They have to return to the Academy each night.

Telephones were allowed to all Midshipmen during the 2001-2002 Academic Year. It is assumed that telephones will be allowed in the future years. Send your plebe prepaid telephone cards for long distance calls.

Thanksgiving Break will be the first time your plebe will be allowed to travel home since Induction Day. Make plane reservations or travel arrangements early for Thanksgiving break, as the Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving is a very heavily traveled day, and airline flights fill early. Schedules for Thanksgiving break are published on the USNA website under academic schedules.

Book return flights to the Academy so that your plebe will arrive at BWI Airport no less than four (4) hours prior to the expiration of leave. It has been the policy of the Academy that if a return flight is booked to arrive at BWI Airport four (4) hours or more prior to the expiration of leave, and there is a delay in flight due to weather or other reason, then a Midshipman will not be penalized for late return to the Academy. Your plebe should check this to ensure he/she knows the policy. Cutting it close is not worth it.

Army-Navy Football games are usually the first Saturday in December. Held in Philadelphia or Baltimore – check [www.navysports.com](http://www.navysports.com) for the actual schedule. Don't miss the opportunity to attend this traditional historic football game.

BEAT ARMY !!!

Christmas Break for your plebe will begin after his or her last exam, and after his or her last military obligation. Make plane reservations or travel arrangements as soon as your plebe knows their exam schedule. Christmas break usually lasts about three weeks, and ends just after New Year's Day.

As Midshipmen return from Christmas Leave, they must settle in for the long, cold, months ahead. Traditionally, the months between Christmas Leave and Spring Break are known as the "Dark Ages." This is a time of an intense academic schedule, cold weather and short days. It is important during this period that you provide more encouragement to your plebe to work hard and keep a positive attitude. Send more care packages and write more often.

Spring Break is usually around mid-March. If possible, book a week long vacation to allow your plebe full rest and relaxation, but check with your mid first. Sometimes ECAD or sports teams travel for Spring Break.

## **SEA TRIALS**

The purpose of Sea Trials is really two-fold. Sea Trials challenges the fourth class morally, mentally, physically and provides these midshipmen with personal feedback on their own plebe year experience. Furthermore, Sea Trials provides the upper class with an opportunity to enhance and strengthen their leadership capabilities. Although no material reward exists for those who participate and successfully complete Sea Trials, satisfaction comes from knowing that with the help of shipmates, motivation, and determination, any challenge or obstacle can be overcome.

Sea Trials evolved from a study that examined the length and effectiveness of the plebe training system. Prior to the 1999 Sea Trials, an initial team

comprised of members of the classes of '97 and '98 agreed that plebe year should last a full year and recommended that additional focus be given to training during the second semester. Sea Trials - a "capstone" event for the 4/C, similar to the Marine Corps' Crucible and the Navy's Battle Stations Program- provides a training objective.

Each phase of Sea Trials incorporates different aspects of leadership and following, utilizing various challenges based on simulated situations that exist in the Fleet.

Although some squads experience some different evolutions within one of the five main phases, each squad of plebes has the same overall experience.

## **HERNDON**

The Herndon Monument is a gray, granite obelisk - 21 feet high (48" Square at bottom) with matching gray, granite base, 71" Square.

The Herndon Monument was commissioned by the Officers of the U.S. Navy as a tribute to Commander William Lewis Herndon (1813-1857) after his loss in the Pacific Mail Steamer "Central America" during a hurricane off Georgia on September 12, 1857. Herndon had followed the long time custom of the sea that a ship's captain is the last person to depart his ship in peril. It was erected in its current location on June 16, 1860 and has never been moved even though the Academy was completely rebuilt between 1899 and 1908.

Beginning in the late 1920s, the Herndon Monument became the center of what is known today as the Plebe Recognition Ceremony. (Perhaps because it is the last rite of passage?) The ceremony evolved from the custom of plebes, when departing graduation exercises in Dahlgren Hall, of reversing their uniform jackets and hats and snake dancing through the yard singing the ditty "Ain't No More Rivers," meaning the official end of fourth class year. Eventually the custom came to involve climbing various monuments in the yard and placing their hats on top. The tallest challenge was the Herndon Monument.

As the ceremony evolved it became the only challenge and the only monument used in the ritual. The legend developed that the student who got his hat on the pinnacle of the obelisk first would become the first Admiral of his class. Although records have been kept in recent years, the legend has not proved true. Beginning in the mid-1970s it became a tradition that the Midshipman who first reached the top is carried by his classmates to the Superintendent, who observes the ceremony from the Chapel steps, where the triumphant Midshipman is given a pair of Admiral shoulder boards. When

graduation exercises were held in Dahlgren Hall, the ceremony was among the last of the events of June Week (Commissioning Week).

After 1966, when the graduation ceremonies were moved to the Navy-Marine Corps Stadium, it was among the first of the events. Beginning in the 1950s, the upper classes decided to make the task more difficult and started the custom of coating the granite shaft with grease such as lard and cooking fat and digging a mud pit around its base. The latter custom has been discontinued, but the greasing continues. At some point, too, it became a custom to glue and/or tape a plebe's "dixie cup" hat to the top of the monument so that it had to be removed before their standard visored hat could be put in its place.

The monument climb is timed and a salute cannon is fired to signal the beginning of the ceremony and every fifteen minutes during the climb. The record time of one minute, thirty seconds was set by the class of 1972 in 1969. To date, the longest climb was in 1995 when the Class of 1998 took four hours, five minutes and seventeen seconds.

### **PLEBES NO MORE!!**

The Plebe Year "officially" comes to an end with the completion of Herndon and when the cheer, "Plebes no More!!!" rings out loud and clear across the Yard. Now officially Fourth Classmen (4/C), the Mids will become third classmen(3/C) and change their shoulder boards at the conclusion of Commissioning of the First Class Midshipmen several days later. However, the 3/C is not "Youngster" until they sight the Chapel Dome upon returning from their Youngster Cruise.

Congratulations to all plebe Parents. Your mids are plebes no more!!!

### **Summer Blocks**

Last year the 3rd Class summer was made up of four (4) three-week blocks. Subsequent summers have consisted of three (3) four-week blocks. During the 3rd Class summer, midshipman were required to spend six weeks (2-blocks) on two separate cruises. One three-week mandatory block was spent on a YP Cruise, when they sailed on a Yard Patrol (YP) Ship out of Annapolis and up the east coast to New York, Boston, and Rhode Island. The second three-week block was selected by the midshipman between NTT (Naval Tactical Training) and CSNTS (Command Seamanship Navigation Training Squadron). Information about summer responsibilities, when available, can be found at <http://www.usna.edu>.

## Glossary for the Plebe Year

**Academy website**-A lot of information is available on the [United States Naval Academy web site](#). Once on the home page, go to Public Affairs office (PAO), and look under miscellaneous schedules. You may know in advance of your plebe when he or she is able to make calls home. If the schedules are not posted at the beginning of the summer, keep checking.

**Accommodations**-The Navy Lodge located across the Severn River at the Naval Station is a convenient and inexpensive place to stay. It is available to families of Midshipmen, and your Midshipmen must be with you when you check into the Navy Lodge. It is difficult to get a reservation at the [Navy Lodge](#), and reservations are made by telephone no earlier than 60 days in advance of your stay. The telephone number is (410) 757-7900. You will need to call immediately after midnight on the 60th day prior to your stay, and just hope there is an available room. For other hotels, motels, bed and breakfast suggestion please visit [www.stayannapolis.com](http://www.stayannapolis.com) or our Corporate Members on [usnaparent.com](http://usnaparent.com) under "Parents".

**Alcohol and Drugs**-plebes are not allowed to consume alcoholic beverages regardless of age. Upper class midshipmen may drink in the state of Maryland if they are 21 years of age. The use of illegal drugs is strictly forbidden and results in expulsion from the academy. All midshipmen are subject to random drug testing through urinalysis, consistent with Navy-wide policies and procedures. <sup>1</sup>

**Alumni Association & Foundation**-The Alumni Association & Foundation are non-profit corporations, independent of the Naval Academy, with nearly 50,000 members, of whom a majority are life members. Both organizations work together as one enterprise and are led by one president and CEO. The Alumni Association communicates issues to its members through its Web site, [usna.com](http://usna.com) (you can also click on [usnaparents.com](http://usnaparents.com) which will direct you to the main site), e-mail listservs and Shipmate magazine. The association also provides its members with a variety of services, including sponsorship of events around the country; class, chapter and parent club support; career transition assistance; a welcome tent at home football games; a travel program; an affinity credit card; and much more..

**Annapolis Transit**-The City of Annapolis runs Trolleys, and buses. [Check exact schedules, routes and rates](#). Also see [www.annapolisbus.com](http://www.annapolisbus.com).

The City of Annapolis runs a bus from the Navy-Marine Corps Stadium to the bottom of Main St. by way of Church Circle. It cost \$ .75 into town and the return trip is free.

**Athletics**-The Naval Academy athletic program is not just an extracurricular activity – it is part of the mission, and as such receives a priority much different than at civilian schools. The athletic teams are an integral part of the overall education of a total person. Athletics provide leadership opportunities and the experiences of team play, cooperative effort, commitment and individual sacrifice for goals that some may or may not be able to achieve. Athletics play a big part in every midshipman's life at the Naval Academy.

In the academy's program everyone has a wide variety of athletic choices, as well as the required physical education curriculum. The primary goal of the physical education curriculum is fitness, which is so vital for your midshipman's health, personal appearance and well-being.

The Commandant hopes to raise interest and ensure proficiency in what we call "carryover" sports that our young men and women can enjoy for a lifetime, such as tennis, golf, squash, handball and swimming. Here at the Naval Academy we have excellent facilities for all midshipmen to gain the necessary skill levels for future enjoyment. <sup>1</sup>

**Athletic and Scholarship Foundation**-The Naval Academy Athletic and Scholarship Program, a division of the United States Naval Academy Foundation, encourages and supports athletic excellence at the Naval Academy. The Program is responsible for grants and awards that recognize top athletes,

support Navy sports teams and fund a comprehensive prep school scholarship program to ensure that the Naval Academy has the best scholar-athletes in the nation.

**Brigade**-At the Naval Academy there is THE BRIGADE. It has two REGIMENTS.

1st Regiment – Divided into three BATTALIONS

1st Battalion (COMPANIES 1-5)

2nd Battalion (COMPANIES 6-10)

3rd Battalion (COMPANIES 11-15)

2nd Regiment – Divided into three BATTALIONS

4th Battalion (COMPANIES 16-20)

5th Battalion (COMPANIES 21-25)

6th Battalion (COMPANIES 26-30)

**Character Development** -Moral and ethical development is a fundamental element of all aspects of the Naval Academy experience. As future officers in the Navy or Marine Corps, midshipmen will someday be responsible for the priceless lives of many men and women and multi-million dollar equipment.

From Plebe Summer through graduation, the Naval Academy's Character Development Program, a four-year integrated continuum, focuses on integrity, honor, and mutual respect. One of the goals of this program is to develop midshipmen who possess a clear sense of their own moral beliefs and the ability to articulate them.

Honor is emphasized through the Honor Concept of the Brigade of Midshipmen, a system originally formulated in 1951, which states, "Midshipmen are persons of integrity: they stand for that which is right." These Naval Academy "words to live by" are based on the moral values of respect for human dignity, respect for honesty and respect for the property of others.

The Brigade Honor Committee, composed of upper class midshipmen, is responsible for education and training in the Honor Concept. Midshipmen found in violation of the Honor Concept by their peers may be separated from the Naval Academy. <sup>1</sup>

**Courtesy Shuttle**-The shuttle runs in support of scheduled USNA events. When operating it runs every 30 minutes. It is not handicapped accessible. Check the [Courtesy Shuttle Schedule](#) for current operation.

**FONA Passes**-Friends of the Naval Academy (FONA) passes. Midshipmen's parents are authorized vehicular access with Friends of the Naval Academy passes. Many parents have already applied for a FONA pass and once onboard will be able to pick up passes in the courtesy tents located in front of Alumni Hall. Parents who have not yet applied will be able to do so at the same location. FONA passes take time to process and will be forwarded to plebes when completed. The FONA pass will enable parents to enter USNA gates throughout the academic year in the identified vehicles on the FONA pass or in a rental vehicle.

Mail-

Q: Can I leave care packages at the Main Office on I-Day?

A: No. The Naval Academy Base Operations officer has advised that due to security, care packages will not be allowed through the Gate, and the Main Office at Bancroft may refuse to accept packages to be left for plebes on I-Day. All care packages should be mailed.

During the plebe Summer: USPS Address: (Letters, Postcards, USPS Packages)

Midn First Middle Last Class of 20XX

? Platoon

PO Box YYYYY  
Annapolis, MD 21412-YYYY  
For “?” insert your Mid’s assigned Platoon number  
For YYYYY insert your Mid’s assigned PO Box number  
Note: The last four digits of the PO Box are the last four digits of the ZIP Code.

Shipping address: (UPS, FedEx, FedEx Ground, Airborne Express)  
Midn First Middle Last Class of 20XX  
? Platoon  
USNA  
Bancroft Hall Express Office  
Annapolis, MD 21412

Telephone: (410) 293-5001 (Bancroft Hall – Main Office)

After plebe Summer: USPS Address:

Midn First Middle Last Class of 20XX  
PO Box YYYYY  
Annapolis, MD 21412-YYYY

We suggest you mail/ship a package before you leave Annapolis.

Q: How do I get goods and materials delivered to the Naval Academy?

A: [Delivery requirements can be found here.](#)<sup>3</sup>

**Medical Treatment**-The academy advises that, if allowed by their health insurance carriers, parents maintain a health insurance policy for their midshipman. Midshipmen may be eligible for Veterans Administration follow-up care for service-connected injury or illness leading to discharge, but maintaining previous health insurance has proven beneficial in cases where preexisting conditions were a factor.

All Midshipmen who receive medical treatment must report to the Medical Records Department, USNA Medical Clinic within 48 hours after return to the Naval Academy to initiate the claims payment process.

Non-Emergencies: Call Tri-Care at 1-888-999-5195 and obtain prior approval for treatment.

Emergencies: Call Tri-Care at 1-888-999-5195 within 24 hours upon completion of treatment. If hospitalized immediately notify the Naval Academy Command Duty Officer, 410-293-2701/2702; main office, 410-293-5001/01/03.<sup>1</sup>

Bills will not be reimbursed by the government for medical treatment received at a civilian medical facility unless the treatment was authorized beforehand or considered an emergency.

**Motor Vehicles**-Restrictions apply to midshipmen with motor vehicles because parking space is very limited at the academy and in Annapolis. In addition, only first class midshipmen are allowed to park on the Yard. The current rules are:

- Youngsters and plebes are not permitted to operate motor vehicles except when on authorized leave.
- 2/C midshipmen may have a car but must maintain and operate it beyond academy grounds.
- 1/C midshipmen may drive a car in Annapolis, on the Yard, and park on the Yard in designated areas.

No midshipman is allowed to maintain or operate a motorcycle.<sup>1</sup>

**Navy Football Games**-Membership in the [Naval Academy Athletic Association](#) (NAAA) is open to all parents of midshipmen. Benefits of an NAAA membership include ticket discounts and special class specific seating. NAAA serves to assist in funding 30 men's and women's varsity and 14 junior varsity sports. For additional information pertaining to levels and privileges of NAAA membership, please call the Navy Ticket Office at: **1-800-US4-NAVY**.

**\*Parking-Meters**-50/hr., max. 2 hrs., 10 a.m. – 7:30 p.m. 7 days/week

Garages – \$1/hr., first hr. free, Sundays free

Max. \$4 weekends

Max. \$8 weekdays

Hillman Garage located at the bottom of Main St. on Duke of Gloucester St.

Grotts Court Garage located next to main Visitors Center on Northwest St. (off Calvert St.)

Whitmore Garage off Calvert St.

USNA Navy-Marine Corps Stadium \$4-\$5/day

\*Prices subject to change

**Pay and Benefits**-The Navy pays tuition, room and board, medical and dental care of Naval Academy midshipmen. They also have 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 pegged at 35% of an Ensign's pay. Whenever Ensigns receive a pay raise, so will the midshipmen. Uniform, laundry, barber, cobble, activities fees, yearbook and other service charges are deducted. Actual cash pay is \$100.00 per month the first year, increasing each year to over \$400.00 per month in the fourth. <sup>1</sup>

**Security**-After 9/11, visits to the Yard for non-military visitors including parents and families of midshipmen dramatically changed. For a couple of months following 9/11, no civilian visitors were allowed on the Yard, and armed sailors and marines guarded the gates and patrolled the walls and water surrounding the Academy boundaries. Access to the Academy grounds is still restricted, and we recommend that you call the Parent Program Office for further information if you specific questions concerning access to the Yard.

Q: What are the Naval Academy's gate hours?

A: Gate 1: Open from 6 am to 10 pm daily for vehicular traffic and from 6 am to midnight Sunday-Thursday and 6 am to 1 am Friday-Saturday for pedestrian traffic.

Gate 3: Pedestrian traffic access from 6 am-10 pm daily.

- Open to **Inbound vehicular traffic** only from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. M-F.
- Open to **Outbound vehicular traffic** only from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. M-F.
- Closed to **all vehicular traffic** from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. M-F, and on weekends and holidays.

Gate 8: Open 24 hours a day for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Q: What are the Naval Academy's normal general visiting hours?

A: 9 am to 5 pm daily

Q: How do I get access to the Academy to attend a sporting event or concert after visiting hours?

A: Properly credentialed personnel (Military ID or Blue and Green USNA ID card) may escort you through any gate. Additionally, since this would be considered an official scheduled event, you may walk in through Gate 1 or Gate 3 by stating the event you are attending. You may also take, when one is operating, the courtesy shuttle from the stadium. Courtesy Shuttle schedule All visitors over the age of 16 must have a valid picture ID.

Q: I do not have a Military or USNA ID card, how do I gain access to the Naval Academy Complex?

A: Properly credentialed personnel (Military ID or Blue and Green USNA ID card) may escort you through any gate. General visitors may walk in through Gate 1 or Gate 3. You may also take, when

one is operating, the courtesy shuttle from the stadium. All visitors over the age of 16 must have a valid picture ID.

Q: Do I need a Department of Defense (DoD) ID to walk in?

A: No, as long as you enter during normal visitor hours from 9 am to 5 pm or are attending a scheduled special event.

Q: At what age must someone have a picture ID card?

A: Military beneficiaries must have them at age 10; civilians age 16

Q: What are the Naval Academy's requirements for vehicular entry?

A: The vehicle must have a valid Department of Defense (DoD) Decal, temporary vehicle pass obtained from the pass & ID office, or be an official government vehicle. Personnel must have valid Military or USNA ID card.

Q: Do all passengers in a properly DoD decal vehicle have to have DoD IDs?

A: No. The driver (or at least one passenger) must have a DoD ID card. All other passengers must have a picture ID if they meet the age requirements.

Q: I would like to visit the Naval Academy but do not have a DoD decal, how do I get my vehicle onto the Yard?

A: You are welcome to visit the Naval Academy but your vehicle will not be permitted onboard. You may utilize Annapolis public parking areas and walk in thru Gate 1 or Gate 3, or park your vehicle at the stadium and ride, when one is operating, the courtesy shuttle.

Q: I am a general visitor, how do I get a temporary vehicle pass.

A: The Naval Academy does not issue temporary vehicle passes to general visitors.

Q: Where can the general public park their vehicles in town?

A: There are several public parking garages in Annapolis. In addition, several streets have metered parking.

Q: I am handicapped and have a handicapped placard. Is there any way I can drive onto the Yard?

A: Yes, you can enter through Gate 1. After a vehicle inspection you will be authorized access.

Q: When does the Naval Academy courtesy shuttle run?

A: Check the Security Department home page for the [Courtesy Shuttle schedule](#). The shuttle runs as needed in support of official scheduled events. When operating, the shuttle makes stops roughly every 15-20 minutes at Hubbard, Luce, and Alumni Halls as well as the Visitors Center. Unfortunately the shuttle busses are not handicapped accessible however, handicapped vehicles are allowed aboard the Academy.

Q: I have a medical appointment but do not have a DoD Decal on my vehicle, how do I make my appointment?

A: You should make your appointment during general visiting hours. You can come aboard via the courtesy shuttle, when one is operating.

Q: What do I do if my car has scraped a barrier?

A: If you are involved in any kind of car accident on Naval Academy grounds, contact DoD police in order to make a police report.

Q: My wedding is being held at the Naval Academy. Who do I contact for information concerning security requirements and what I can expect?

A: You may contact the Chapel Wedding Scheduler, at 410-293-1105 or e-mail [maccallu@usna.edu](mailto:maccallu@usna.edu) visit [USNA Chaplain Center/Weddings](#).

Q: Whom do I call with questions concerning a funeral or memorial that is being held aboard the Naval Academy?

A: You should contact Sharon Moffat, Memorial Affairs Coordinator, at 410 -293-1101, or e-mail

[moffatt@usna.edu](mailto:moffatt@usna.edu).

Q: I am a resident aboard the Academy grounds and I am expecting overnight visitors. How may I park their non DoD vehicle aboard the Academy.

A: You must provide the appropriate vehicle data to the pass & tag office outside Gate 8 and they will issue a temporary pass to you. The vehicle is subject to inspection each time it comes aboard.

Q: Are there any regulations I should know about regarding jogging, cycling, walking, and skating aboard the Naval Academy?

A: Exercisers in appropriate attire may pass through Gates 1 and 8 between the hours of 0630 and sunset. Jogging and biking is limited to the roads and sidewalks in areas next to the sea wall, Hospital Point, and Decatur Road from Alumni Hall to Gate 8. Bikers, joggers, and walkers may not wear audio headsets. Bikers must wear ANSI or Snell approved helmets. Roller skating, roller blading, and skateboarding are prohibited.

Security Home Page. <sup>2</sup>

**Spiritual Development**-The Command Religious Program offers a wide variety of worship services, religious education programs, pastoral counseling and other activities for the spiritual, moral and personal growth and enrichment of all midshipmen.

Six Navy chaplains serve at the U.S. Naval Academy: two Catholic priests, three Protestant ministers and one rabbi. Chaplains provide ministry to midshipmen of their respective faith groups, and they ensure the free exercise of religion for everyone.

During plebe Summer, staff chaplains provide worship serves for Protestant, Catholic and Jewish midshipmen. Lay-led services will be held for Muslims. Members of the Latter Day Saints, Lutheran/Episcopal, Church of Christ and Christian Science faith groups gather for their own periods of worship and reflection.

The chaplains at the Naval Academy look forward to your midshipman's arrival and hope to assist them in their moral and spiritual development. <sup>1</sup>

**Sponsor Program**-All new midshipmen can be linked to a local family within 22 miles of the Naval Academy if they wish. The volunteer family can become a comfortable and friendly "home away from home" for the four years the midshipmen is in Annapolis. This arrangement gives the mid a break from the Yard and a chance to relax. For more information on the Sponsor Program contact the USNA Sponsor Coordinator at [sponsor@usna.edu](mailto:sponsor@usna.edu). <sup>3</sup>

## Sources

<sup>1</sup> United States Naval Academy Parent's Almanac

<sup>2</sup> [usna.edu FAQ](#)

<sup>3</sup> Permit To Report package