

# A Tour of the US Service Academies

## Class 1:

### Introduction

### US Merchant Marine Academy

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# Scope

This class will cover the 5 federal service academies:

- US Merchant Marine Academy
- US Coast Guard Academy
- US Air Force Academy
- US Naval Academy
- US Military Academy

# Scope

Will not cover the non federal service academies. These include:

- Norwich University (Northfield, VT)
- Virginia Military Institute  
(Lexington VA)
- The Citadel (Charleston SC)
- Texas A & M (College Station, TX)

# The Basics

Name	Location	Founded	# of students
US Merchant Marine Academy	Kings Point NY	1943	1,011
US Coast Guard Academy	New London CT	1876	896
US Air Force Academy	Colorado Springs CO	1954	4,000
US Naval Academy	Annapolis MD	1845	4,576
US Military Academy	West Point NY	1802	4,294

# Admissions

- The three “DOD” academies – USMA, USNA, USAFA all have similar admission requirements
- Cannot simply apply to them as with a college – need a “nomination.”

# Admissions

- Types of nominations
  - Congressional - 5 nominations per Representative and 5 nominations per Senator
  - Children of Medal of Honor winners
  - Current enlisted soldiers or children of career military officers can secure Presidential nominations.

# Admissions

- USCGA/USMMA do not require nominations
- However, all schools are very selective in their admissions rate:
  - USNA – 9%
  - USMA – 10%
  - USAFA – 12.3%
  - USMMA – 15%
  - USCGA - 16%

# Commitments

- Attendance at the five service academies is free
  - No tuition
  - No room and board
- Also, get paid a certain amount each month



# Commitments

# But ....

# Commitments

- For the following academies, there is an 8 year commitment – at least 5 years active duty and the remainder in the Reserves
  - USMA
  - USNA
  - USAFA
  - USCGA

# Commitments

- As usual, the USMMA is different!
- Graduates must maintain a license as an officer in the merchant marine for six years
- Graduates must also apply for a USNR commission and maintain that commission for 8 years.

# Leadership

- The USCGA, USMA, USNA and USAFA all have a tripartite leadership structure
- Superintendent
  - Equivalent of college President
  - Three star rank in all but USCGA
  - “Tombstone” assignment

# Leadership

- Commandant
  - In charge of the military program
  - BG at USMA and USAFA
  - Captain at USCGA and USNA
- All have been filled by female officers
  - currently USAFA and USCGA
  - Just replaced at USMA
  - USNA had first female commandant in 2006

# Leadership

- Dean of students
  - Permanent assignment (until retirement)
  - BG at USMA and USAFA
  - Captain (ret) at USCGA
  - USNA –civilian

# Leadership

- USMMA
  - Superintendent, Dean and Commandant are commissioned officers of the US Maritime Service
  - Training, not seagoing officers
  - Current occupants retired Army and Marine Corps respectively

# Inclusion

- The service academies had to be dragged, kicking and screaming, into allowing minorities and women
- Let's look at the issues involved with inclusion of
  - Blacks
  - Jews
  - Women
  - Gay/Lesbian



# Blacks

- West Point was the first to admit black cadets, but not with open arms
- James Webster Smith of South Carolina was the first black cadet, admitted in 1870
- However, he did not graduate – he was subject to unmitigated hazing and flunked out in 1874
- After leaving West Point, he was appointed Commandant of Cadets at what was to become SC State, but died of TB in 1876

# Henry O. Flipper

- Henry Flipper was the first black graduate of USMA, in the class of 1877
- Assigned to the 10<sup>th</sup> Cavalry (one of the Buffalo Soldier Regiments) he fought against the Apaches



# Henry O. Flipper

- He was court martialled in 1881 over a discrepancy in funds and spent the rest of his life as an engineer, principally in Latin America
- Long after his death in 1940, both his discharge and court martial were overturned



# Benjamin O. Davis

- The most famous early black graduate was Benjamin O. Davis, class of 1936
- His father, also Benjamin, was the first black General Officer, promoted in 1940



# Benjamin O. Davis

- Davis was commander of the Tuskegee Airman during WWII, and later retired as a 3 star general (later promoted for 4 stars on the retired list)
- Recently, the newest barracks constructed at West Point (and first since the mid 1970's) was named for General Davis



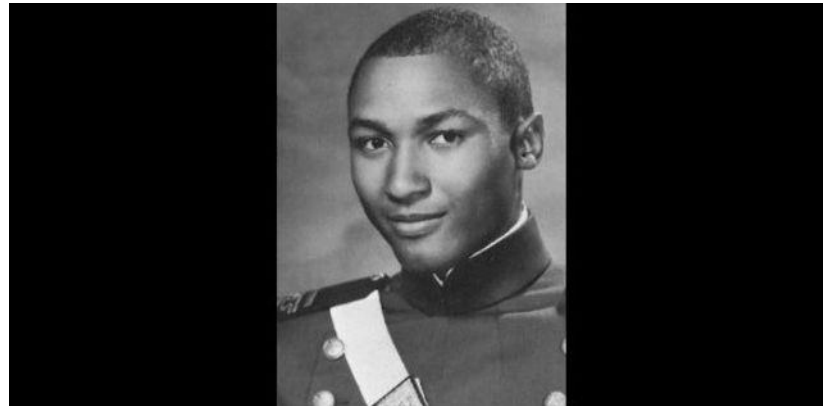
# USNA

- The first black Naval Academy graduate was Wesley Brown, (right) who graduated with the class of 1949, more than 70 years after Flipper
- It would be another three years before the second black graduated, Lawrence Chambers, with the class of 1952



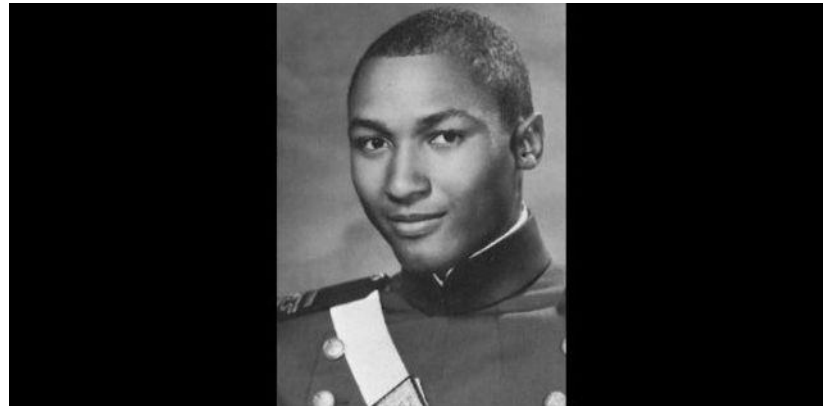
# USAFA

- Despite the fact that the USAFA started after both USMA and USNA graduated blacks, the first blacks did not enter USAFA until 1959.
- Charles V Bush, Class of 1963, was the first to graduate



# USAFA

- He served on active duty for seven years, to include service in Vietnam
- In 1970, he resigned his commission and entered business
- More about current issues with blacks at USAFA next week





# USCGA

- The first black cadet entered the USCGA in 1955, but had to resign for health reasons in 1957
- First grad was Merle Smith, in 1966
- He entered a Coast Guard Officer Corps that was more than 99% white

## USMMA

- The USMMA did slightly better, graduating its first black graduate in 1944, during WWII
- Joseph B. Williams was also a graduate of Hampton Institute



## USMMA

After the War,  
he graduated  
from NYU Law  
School and was  
later a judge in  
both family and  
criminal court,  
before being  
promoted to the  
appellate court



# Jews

- Jewish cadets had been present at West Point literally from the beginning of the Academy
- Simon Magruder Levy was one of the first cadets to enter West Point, and was the second graduate on October 12, 1802
- There continued to be Jews at the Military Academy, although in small numbers

# Jews

- This caused a problem during the days of mandatory chapel (more about that later)
- A Jewish chapel was built in 1984

# Jews in USNA

- Background – there is an intense rivalry at all of the Academies to be the top grad (and perversely, a rivalry to graduate at the exact bottom)
- In the class of 1922, the two rivals were Jerald Olmstead (who was also the yearbook editor) and Leonard Kaplan (who was Jewish)

## Jews

- So Olmstead made sure Kaplan's yearbook page was unique
- First, he put next to it a cartoon graduate, PA List
- List was described as born "in the township of Zion, county of Cork, state of Ignorance" on St. Patrick's Day, 1900 (good way to slap down the Irish also)



## Jews

But what made the page unique was that it was detachable (and not numbered) – could be removed from the yearbook without damaging the book





# Jews

- Olmstead won in the short run – he finished first and Kaplan second
- However, Olmstead died less than a year after graduation, and Kaplan went on to a long career in the Navy, retiring in 1949

# Jews

- USNA has had a prize for the midshipman who graduates first
- When Kaplan died in 1983, a rich man, he endowed a prize for the midshipman who finished second in the class – a prize which is worth exactly twice the prize given to the top midshipman

# Women

- With the end of the draft in 1973, women were recruited more heavily to fill the ranks of the military
- Traditionally, women received direct commissions – ROTC was not open to women until 1966
- While women worked in many support jobs in the military, they were part of women's branches, not the service branch

# Women

- During the early 70's, there was a push to admit women to the service academies, and a counter push to continue the academies as all male.
- By the spring of 1975, the services directed the Academies to prepare for admission of women, and on October 8, 1975, President Ford signed a bill allowing women to attend all of the federal academies

# Women

- As we will discuss shortly, this law did not apply to the United States Merchant Marine Academy – they had been accepting women at Kings Point since 1974

# Women

## West Point



## Air Force



# Women

- While to some extent integration has been successful – women have served as First Captain (leading cadet) at West Point, and the Superintendent and Commandant at USAFA are both women graduates – problems remain with sexual harassment
- Particular issues will be covered with each Academy

# Gay/Lesbian Cadets

- As with the overall military, gay men (and eventually lesbian woman) probably were members of the various corps from earliest times.
- However, such cadets/midshipmen were liable to be dismissed for such tendencies
- In 1994, DOD instituted the don't ask, don't tell policy, which obviously applied to the academies



# Gay/Lesbian Cadets

- During the 15 years DADT was in effect, gay and lesbian cadets and midshipmen became more open – mostly after leaving service
- Both USMA and USNA LBGT grads created alumni organizations

# LBGT Organizations

**USNA – USNA Out**



**USMA – Knights Out**



# Gay/Lesbian Cadets

- In 2011, DADT was repealed and LBG (questions as to T) could serve openly in the armed forces
- This change also applied to the academies
- With the Supreme Court decision allowing gay marriage, cadets and midshipmen are now using post facilities for marriages.

# Gay/Lesbian Cadets

- USAFA has an unofficial gay/lesbian organization, Blue Out
- However, the most recently appointed Commandant of Cadets for USAFA is a serving lesbian BG
- While USAFA did not make a point of this, drew some criticism from grads and others.



# Religious issues

- For many years, mandatory chapel was required at the service academies
- This lead to very strange results
  - There was a “atheist” chapel squad
  - Since academies had classes on Saturday morning, Jewish cadets went to synagogue on Sunday

# Religious issues

## *Anderson v. Laird*

- Started with a 1970 suit to do away with mandatory chapel at USMA
- Brought, by among others, future author Lucian Truscott IV
- Requirement upheld at district level but overturned at the circuit court level
- Supreme Court denied review
- DOD in 1973 promulgated regulations doing away with mandatory chapel

# Religious issues

## Current issues

- Multicity of religions
- Evangelical pressures (more about that with specific academies)

# USMMA

- Training for members of the Merchant Marine had never been formalized
- A 1934 fire aboard a passenger liner, which resulted in 134 deaths, led Congress to conclude federal involvement in training was required.





# USMMA

- In 1936, the United States Merchant Marine Academy was opened in temporary quarters in Kings Point, NY
- A permanent site, located in Kings Park on Walter Chrysler's old estate, was secured in 1942.



# USMMA

- President Franklin Roosevelt dedicated the new facility on September 30, 1943.
- In his remarks, he stated:

*The Academy serves the Merchant Marine as West Point serves the Army and Annapolis the Navy.*



# USMMA - Mission

To educate and graduate  
licensed Merchant Mariners  
and leaders of exemplary  
character, who will serve  
American marine  
transportation and defense  
needs in peace and war

## USMMA – Grads receive

- Bachelor of Science Degree
- USCG license as Merchant Marine Officer
- Reserve commission in the US Navy

## USMMA – In exchange grads

- Agree to work in Merchant Marine for 5 years
- Maintain license for 6 years
- Serve in USNR for 8 years



**Aerial View of the USMMA**

# A Tour of campus



## Bell

The tradition is for midshipmen who pass their US Coast Guard license exams to ring the bell





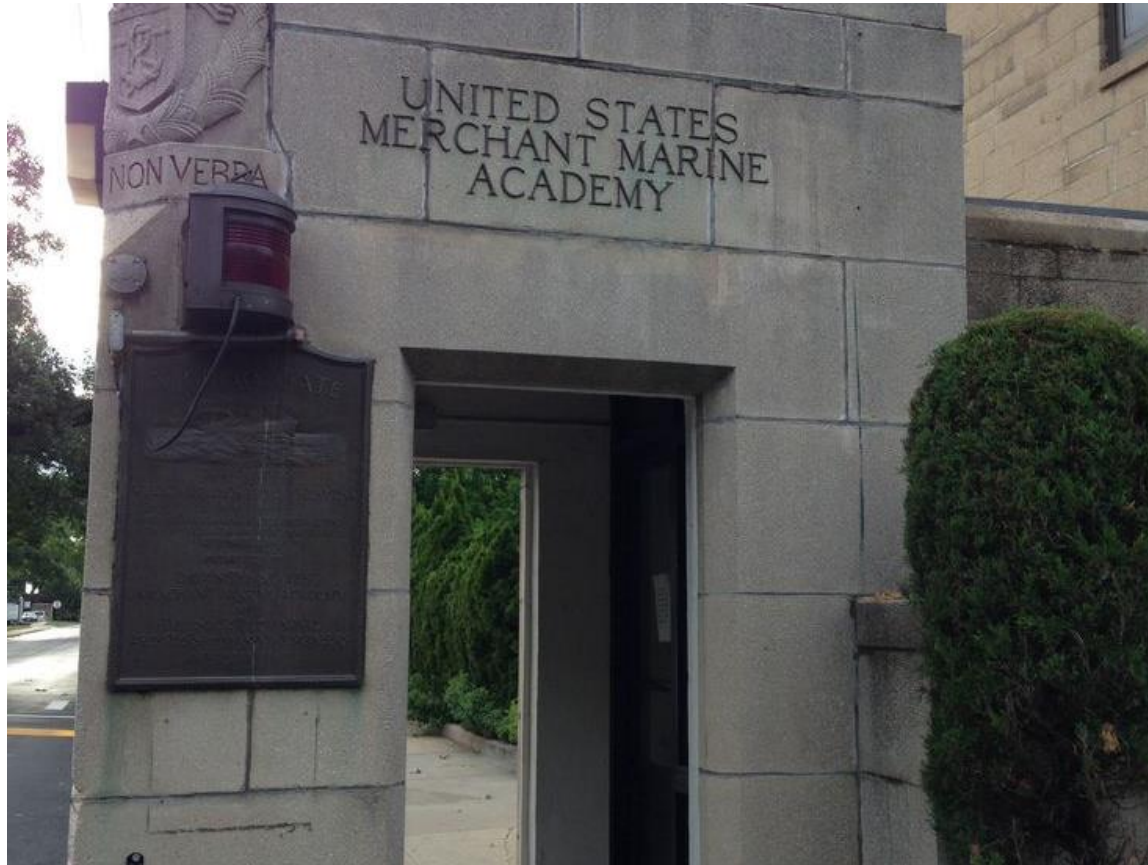
## Brooks Stadium

The field for the USMMA Mariners football, soccer and lacrosse team. The Mariners compete in NCAA Division III



## Chapel

Built in 1961, this interfaith chapel has a main chapel and three smaller chapels. There is also a roll of honor, with the names of 7000 mariners killed during the World Wars



## Gate

Vickery Gate, marking the main entrance to the campus



## Academics



### **Bland Library**

Opened in 1969, and named after the VA Congressmen who was instrumental in creating USMMA



## Bland Library – Babson Globe

Located at the foot of the main stairway, this more than 7 foot globe rotates every three minutes. Gradations in sea depth are marked by differing colors.



## Museum

Contains the Maritime Hall of Fame, largest collection of maritime instruments, one of the swords from the WWII Japanese surrender





## Wiley Hall

Serves as the main administration building  
for USMMA

# USMMA

## Leadership

- The Superintendent is Rear Admiral James Hellis, USMS is a graduate of West Point
- He served in the US Army for 30 years, with his final assignment as the Chairman of the Department of National Security and Strategy at the US Army War College





# USMMA

## Leadership

- In addition to his West Point degree, he holds a PhD from Tufts in International Relations
- Note on his naval uniform, below his medals, a patch for the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne – probably unique among naval uniforms!



# USMMA

## Leadership

- The Commandant is CAPT (O6) Mikel Stroud, USMS
- CAPT Stroud served in the US Marine Corps for 20 years
- Upon his retirement, he became a Regimental Tactical Officer at USMMA, along with a position as Assistant Football Coach.
- After serving as acting Commandant starting in October 2016, he was permanently assigned in May 2017



## Issues

- A unique feature of the USMMA is the year at sea
- As is the case with other academies, the USMMA has had issues with sexual harassment.
- However, during the year at sea, the midshipmen are isolated on merchant marine ships, where at times they are the only midshipmen

## Issues

- As a result of a number of incidents, the year at sea was suspended in June 2016
- Working with companies such as Crowley Maritime Corporation, Maersk Line Limited, and American Presidents Line which provided the most opportunities for the year at sea, specific changes were made.

# Issues

- These include
  - zero tolerance for sexual assault sexual harassment (SASH),
  - vetted mentors,
  - regular crew training,
  - no fraternization between crew and Midshipmen.
- These requirements will be reviewed after six months, and annually thereafter.

## Issues

- After these changes, year at sea was renewed in March 2017
- Also, reaccreditation of the USMMA was put at risk due to sexual harassment issues

## Issues

In light of the changes made  
by the USMMA,  
reaccreditation was granted  
in November 2017

## Issues

- There remains a “year at sea” but now it is divided into smaller chunks
- Mids can choose which track they want to follow, with preference given to athletes and other groups such as the Band



## Issues

- See briefing

# Famous Grads

**Lane Kirkland –  
President, AFL-CIO**



**Mark Kelly –  
Astronaut, one of twins, husband  
of Congresswoman Gifford**



# Famous Non Grads

**Andrew Card –  
CoS to President George HW Bush**



**Carroll O'Connor –  
Actor, Archie Bunker**



## Next class

- We head first to New London, to spend time at the United States Coast Guard Academy
- Then head west to the Rockies, to Colorado Springs, to tour the United States Air Force Academy

# Thanks

- Much thanks to OLLI member John Quinn, who was able to get me in contact with Dr. Shashi Kumar the Deputy Associate Administrator for Maritime Education and Training
- Much of the nuts and bolts of the USMMA program in this class came from the briefing slides provide by Dr. Kumar