

# WEST POINT PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT EXCELLENCE



West Point  
**READY** 

READY TO SERVE. READY TO LEAD.



"The Kinesiology curriculum educates individuals with a first-person insight into the capabilities and limitations of the human body with utilization of the Human Performance Lab and real accounts of past and current experiences from our faculty." —Cadet Kelsey Taylor, Class of 2023



Since its inception, USMA's Department of Physical Education (DPE) has been tasked with the crucial mission to challenge each cadet with a rigorous physical education curriculum that simulates real-world scenarios, supports peak athleticism, and instills mental toughness and resiliency in order to prepare West Point's next generation of officers for success in battle and leadership positions across the globe.

While federal dollars fund the department's core programs, private donations provide for updated equipment and facilities, cutting-edge performance enhancing software, academic enrichment and more. These Margin of Excellence opportunities provide a cadet-centered educational environment that is both militarily relevant and scientifically based. Yet despite this success, gift funds still fall short as many gifts vary from year to year or are restricted to specific opportunities. Therefore, the West Point Association of Graduates is seeking endowment funding on behalf of DPE to enhance and sustain in perpetuity several core elements of this vital program.

## THE HUMAN PERFORMANCE LABORATORY

One of the most technologically advanced offerings within DPE, the Human Performance Laboratory (HPL), is a cadet-centered, state-of-the-art facility designed to conduct basic and applied research toward a fundamental understanding of physical training and biological adaptation. It offers extraordinary potential to transform the way the Corps of Cadets approaches and understands the physical demands placed on the 21st-century soldier. From the Wireless Electromyography System which measures muscle activation, to the Air Displacement Plethysmography "Bod Pod" which performs body composition analysis, or the OptoGait System which examines kinematic and movement patterns, to the Jump Force Plates and Tendo Unit which analyze peak power, velocity, and force—the HPL effectively supplements the DPE curriculum by comprehensively addressing the physiological, psychological, and mechanical

aspects of movement. Through Cadet engagement with the HPL, West Point can help provide the Army with graduates who are well-versed in the complexities of the structure-function relationships of performance.

## COMBAT WATER SURVIVAL SWIM LABORATORY

The Combat Water Survival Swim Lab is a state-of-the-art facility that incorporates numerous modified environmental simulators to effectively train and evaluate cadets in the life-saving skills of Survival Swimming. Originally constructed to standard industry specifications (6 lanes, 25 yards x 14 yards) for the opening of the Arvin Cadet Physical Development Center in 2005, the facility has since been modified into a working laboratory to replicate various environmental elements found in open waters.

Designed specifically for instruction and research, the Survival Swim Lab is used comprehensively across the Survival Swimming curriculum, with the primary function to train and test cadet performance in both the 5-Minute ACU Survival Swim and the Survival Gate #4. In these demanding exercises, cadets must demonstrate the ability to perform four strokes, swimming in waves non-stop for five minutes while wearing full battle dress (ACUs and boots). In the Survival Gate #4, cadets are encumbered with a weighted MOLLE, M4 weapon carriage, and ACU inflation. A specially designed plunger mechanism churns the 24-inch waves while indirect strobe lights/laser illumination fill the lab intermittently; a specially designed fog system produces surface haze; rain is generated from carefully placed distribution nozzles; and simulated auditory battlefield distractions provide a deafening yet stark awakening to operational water survivability. These simulated performance parameters are some of the most realistic available, and help provide data for research as well as enhance physical aptitude, grit, and strength.

## STRENGTH & CONDITIONING GYM

This 8,000 square foot state-of-the-art free weight training area is located on the third floor of the Arvin Cadet Physical Development Center (ACPDC) and features 45 different pieces of equipment with over 10,000 pounds of training weight. It is the primary and central gym accessible by cadets to perform independent strength training workouts. Here, cadets can perform exercises which support and complement several mandatory physical education classes that teach safe and proper resistance training techniques and upper-class cadets can elect to enroll in a strength development class focused on hands-on experience with multi-joint strength exercises, Olympic weightlifting, and plyometrics. This important facility helps develop individual excellence today while helping cadets establish the life-long habits and commitment to physical fitness that will serve them tomorrow.

## COMBATIVES PROGRAM

The nature of military operations requires that every soldier be fully proficient in the basic combative skills needed to engage and defeat an enemy in Close Quarters Combat (CQC). These tactical situations refer to physical fights between two or more individuals, usually involving personal weapons, in short bodily proximity ranging from hand-to-hand combat up to a distance of 10 yards. In real-world scenarios, cadets will be faced with attacking enemies and defending hostages or civilians under circumstances that require rapid decision-making and a precise implementation of force.

In response to this real-world mandate, West Point has established a rigorous combatives progression experienced by all cadets, with four combatives studios at the ACPDC totaling more than 12,000 square feet of useable space. These rooms are designed and equipped similarly to traditional wrestling rooms, with safety-padded walls and floors, ceiling height which permits flips and throws, and – although not air conditioned – a ventilation system which adequately circulates air in all seasons. These venues also host the submission grappling company athletic competitions and the Army West Point Judo Team.

“Peak physical performance is incredibly important for any soldier regardless of occupational specialty. First, every soldier needs to be able to fight. Also, being physically fit has more benefits than just looking good and feeling good. It is important for sustaining mental health and improving quality of life. Finally, you owe it to your soldiers.”

—Cadet Jackson Colehower, Class of 2022

## ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

The Department of Physical Education’s Academic Enrichment Program (AEP) provides a comprehensive extracurricular suite of activities that serve as a vehicle for cadets to develop their leadership potential as individuals, as team members, and as future Army officers. Faculty and cadets can tackle a wide range of concerns in the physical domain relevant to the Army and the nation through innovative research, collaboration, and outreach. AEP offerings include competitive sports programs, guest speaker series, conferences, course trips that connect cadets to a wider world of practitioners and leaders, and summer programs that offer physical challenges in the mountains and waters across the United States.

The Department of Physical Education’s impact on developing Army leadership is indispensable, and privately funded Margin of Excellence opportunities greatly enhance this impact. In a world of uncertainty and change, a flexible and reliable source of funding will empower innovation among cadets and faculty and enable engagement with the cutting-edge resources and opportunities essential to DPE’s world-class physical development experience.





# FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

**GENEROUS GRADUATES AND FRIENDS OF THE ACADEMY WHO SUPPORT WEST POINT'S PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT EXCELLENCE WILL TAKE PRIDE IN THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF THEIR GIFTS.**

Physical Development Excellence Endowment ..... \$5.1 million

*Funding & Recognition Opportunities*

Combat Water Survival Swim Lab Naming ..... \$2.5 million  
Combat Water Survival Swim Lab Funding ..... \$500,000 endowment/\$20,000 annual  
Strength & Conditioning Room Naming (reserved) ..... \$1.5 million  
Strength & Conditioning Room Funding ..... \$250,000 endowment/\$10,000 annual  
Combatives Program ..... \$1 million endowment/\$40,000 annual  
Human Performance Lab ..... \$550,000 endowment/\$22,000 annual  
Physical Education Enrichment Program ..... \$250,000 endowment/\$10,000 annual

MARGIN OF EXCELLENCE



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as of May 3, 2022