

ADMISSIONS OFFICE INFORMATION BULLETIN

Minority Graduate
Newsletter - 1990

Minority recruiting challenges ahead

Dear Graduates and Friends,

Recruiting quality minority students for admission to West Point is becoming more and more challenging with decreasing numbers of college-bound students and the increasing emphasis placed on minority recruiting by colleges and universities throughout the nation. There is also an awareness among Black Americans on the quality education available to them at traditionally Black colleges and universities.

Getting the message out to minority students on the advantages of West Point's academic, leadership and military training programs is critically important. In this newsletter one of our Outreach Officers, 1LT Miquel Polanco, tells about a misperception on Army life as a junior officer. He says some students believe life in the Army after graduating from West Point is like that depicted in the movie "Private Benjamin." These misperceptions can hurt, if not disputed by facts that show the career enhancing opportunities available to our graduates in the first years of their military service.

CPT Byron Gibson, our Minority Recruiting Officer, has completed his first admissions cycle and is assessing a variety of steps for us to improve our posture in identifying and enrolling

Director's Comments



Colonel Pierce A. Rushton Jr.
Director of Admissions

minority students. We are initiating special advertising in a variety of general and student oriented minority publications to reach both the college bound minority students as well as their influencers. We plan to increase personalized direct mail to our minority student population to keep them fully informed about the "West Point experience."

What we should not forget is the success rate of our minority students here at the U.S. Military Academy. Their persistence rate and graduation rate are two of our major success stories.

In November, the Chronicle of Higher Education addressed the concerns for improved minority retention in college in a front page article entitled, "Colleges Try New Ways to Insure Minority

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Students Make It to Graduation."

A national study by the Education Department of 1980 high school graduates shows why colleges are concerned with minority retention. While 52 percent of the white 1980 graduates who entered four-year institutions had received bachelor's degrees by 1986, just over a quarter -- 26.6 percent -- of the blacks and hispanics had done so.

USMA has been much more successful in making sure minority cadets reach their goals, a bachelor of science degree and a commission as a second lieutenant at graduation. Graduation rates for all minority students during the 1980s range in the 60 to 70 percentiles. Our rate has been very consistent for the past five years. We have improved the graduation rates for minorities to better than 70 percent during this decade. Classes in the 1970s were often in the 50 percentile for black, hispanic and women populations.

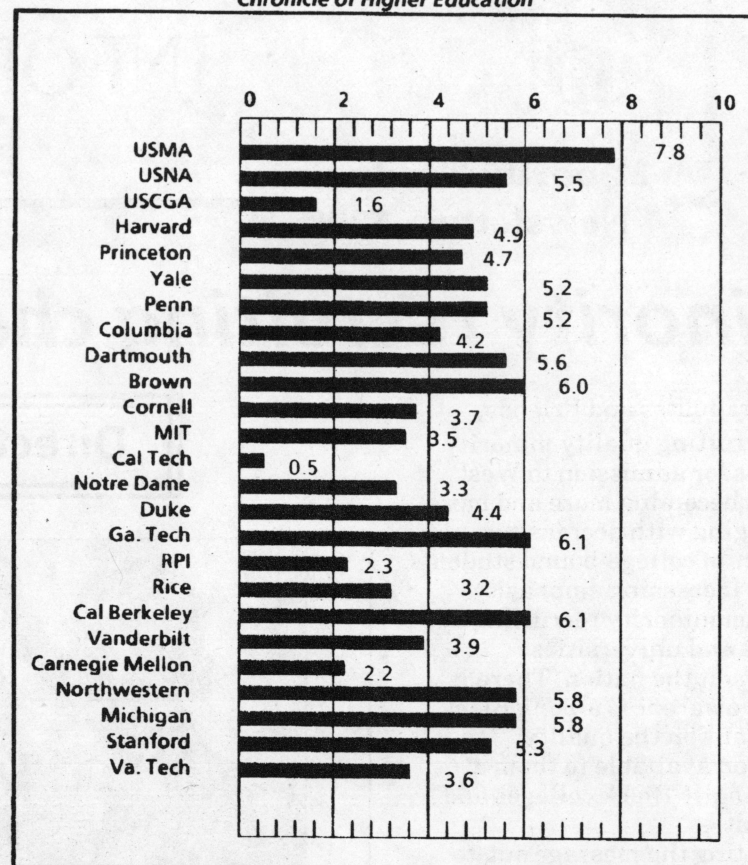
Black cadets have exceeded the class for two of the last five years. Hispanic cadets have graduated better than the class for the last two years. We expect to graduate our 1,000th Black American with the Class of 1991.

Our challenge is two-fold. Communicate with and enroll the best who are a match for our programs. Retain them! I often say "the best recruiting we can do is on our own campus, if we have enrolled wisely."

Jack Rennard, Dean of Admissions USNA, handed me the chart shown here during the Superintendents' Conference at the Air Force Academy in May. It shows USMA black enrollment and that of a number of other colleges as a percent of the student body (Corps of Cadets for us). On a relative basis we are doing well with our challenge: enrollment

1988 Black Student Enrollment

Percentage of Total Enrollment
Chronicle of Higher Education



and retention.

This information is important because of the national concern about graduation rates. It, too, is an important message to provide to minority students and their parents. Here at West Point there are many support systems to help minority students reach their goals, whether it be individual instruction or participation in the Gospel Choir or Contemporary Affairs Club. There are also some fine examples of minority success stories at West Point which we are bringing to your attention in this newsletter. An article on Mike Mayweather, Army's outstanding halfback, tells about the adversity this young man overcame to obtain a college education when his nine brothers and sisters were unable to do so. A story by Purdue history professor

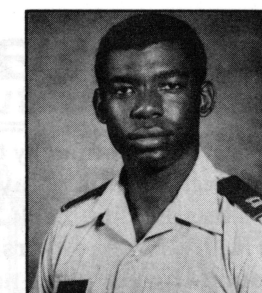
Christopher Basso details how the U.S. Army has become a shining example as a social institution for providing opportunities for minorities. There is also a detailed article on 1LT Polanco on his experiences as an Outreach Officer and his changing view of the Academy after returning.

We hope these comments increase your interest in helping. CPT Gibson explains how you can join us, and I also ask you to seriously consider "closing ranks with us".

Pierce A. Rushton, Jr.

PIERCE A. RUSHTON, JR.
Colonel, U.S. Army
Director of Admissions

A message on minority recruiting



CPT Byron Gibson
Equal Admissions Officer

Dear Graduates and Friends,

This is the first opportunity I have had since joining the Admissions Office in July to discuss some of my concerns about minority recruiting and the challenges we face in the future.

First, let me say that it has been a privilege serving in this capacity for the Director of Admissions. As a 1981 West Point graduate, returning to the academy has been a real learning experience. I have felt many emotions, some of great joy and some of great disappointment. Educating minority students on the challenges and opportunities of a U.S. Military Academy education is exhilarating. However, meeting students and parents who are so ill informed on the merits of the West Point experience is depressing.

COL Rushton has told you that graduation rates are strong. This is indeed good news. However, we will admit fewer Black Americans this year than we admitted in the late 1970s. This tells me that it is absolutely necessary to spread the West Point story to the minority community. In these days of shrinking budgets one way to accomplish this effectively is with your help!

There are many ways in which you can assist us in our efforts to identify and offer admission to top quality minority students. Those of you who are involved with media and marketing work can assist us with publicity efforts. Those of you who are community leaders should inform the young people in your town or village about the opportunities at West Point. All of us have the option to offer a monetary contribution through the Association of Graduates to be specifically used for minority recruiting efforts.

You are among more than 1,000 minority graduates and friends listed on our rolls. You have an opportunity to participate in our admissions efforts directly through our Liaison Officer and Admissions Participant programs. There are over 400 reserve field force representatives, but less than 50 are minority officers. You can strengthen our ranks by joining us. Those of you still on active duty should encourage sharp, young soldiers to consider attending the United States Military Academy Preparatory School. There is a good deal of work for all of us if you would like to contribute.

Each generation makes greater strides than the preceeding generation by standing on the backs of those that preceeded them. We must not fail those who will graduate in the 1990s and beyond. Get involved!

Byron Gibson

Byron Gibson
Captain, FA
Equal Admissions Officer

P.S. All it takes to get involved is to fill out the business reply card enclosed in this mailing. Join us!

Mayweather's chance to excel

If there is a boundary to stifling success, Mike Mayweather, Army's talented halfback, hasn't found it. If there is adversity to surmount, this St. Louis native accepts the challenge.

In a time when it is too easy to accept failure, Mayweather is the exception. During the fall the 5-foot-8, 184-pound halfback became the finest rusher in Army football history, surpassing the legendary Glenn Davis who gained 2,957 yards on West Point's national championship teams during the 1940s. Mayweather also became the only halfback in Academy history to gain more than 1,000 yards in two seasons, and still has another year at West Point.

Mayweather and motivation could be characterized as synonymous. While he has achieved a great deal at the U.S. Military Academy, he has gained that much more in life.

When Mike was six his father died, and his mother, Frances Mayweather, was tasked with the responsibility for raising 10 children on her own. She toiled 20 years as a kitchen worker at the Missouri School for the Blind. Young Mike Mayweather wasn't thinking about football, but about what might be on the dinner table.

"I guess you would have had to be there to really know what it was like," said Mrs. Mayweather in an article in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. "Sometimes we had nothing; sometimes something just came out of the blue. Somehow, the Lord made a way."

Mike Mayweather also made a way to achieve success. It was more a matter of giving than taking for Mayweather. He shared a room with as many as three brothers and was cared for by his



Mike Mayweather (30) gains yardage against Rutgers.

Editor's Note: The following article on Mike Mayweather was written by Joe Dineen of the Admissions Media Office and was published in The College Digest.

seven older brothers and sisters when his mother was at work.

One of his most cherished gifts was a new pair of shoes. When Mike received any money he returned it to his mother, saying simply, "You need that. You keep that." From this humble background, Mayweather nurtured a dream to obtain a college education, something that none of his brothers and sisters was able to have. It hardly seemed realistic until Ollie Tucker-Ward, a guidance counselor at Stowe Middle School, provided sound advice.

"When Michael was in the sixth grade, one could sense that he was a young man who was going somewhere," said Tucker.

Mike Mayweather is a young man who continues to grow, not only on the athletic field, but in trying to handle the arduous academic tasks at West Point. It isn't easy, but you have a feeling there are times when things were much tougher for Mayweather.

His coach, Jim Young, calls

Mayweather the finest running back he has had in 16 years as a college head coach. Perhaps it is Mayweather's ability to use his speed to get outside, and his strength to go inside that sets this Army running back apart from others Young has guided.

"I was just hoping I'd be able to play," says Mayweather modestly in recalling the start of his Army football career. "I could not have envisioned this at all. Even my fantasies didn't amount to anything of this proportion."

When the early morning news show, "Good Morning, America," visited the Academy in November, Mayweather was a guest on the show. He was joined by Glenn Davis, the man he would supplant as the greatest rusher in West Point history. It was a lofty change from his humble start in life, but perhaps the first of many rewards for a young man who knows no limits to the importance of hard work.

Unquestionably Mike Mayweather's name will be bruited

School of the Nation

U.S. Army shines as a social institution

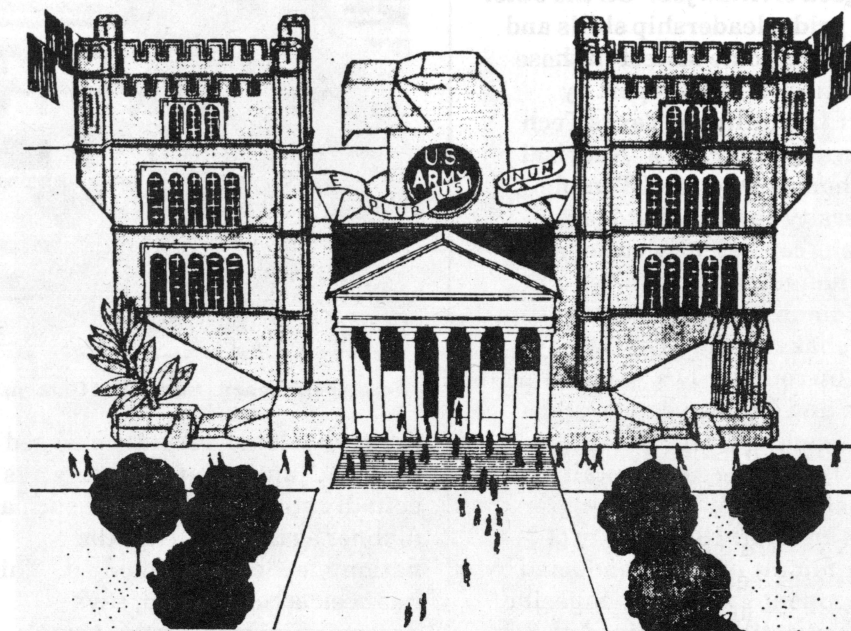
One might reasonably entertain some doubts about the qualities of the U.S. Army as a fighting force or as a manager of our hard-earned tax dollars. There is one area, however, in which the Army really shines: As an American social institution, it has few peers.

That may seem like a strange claim to make for an organization whose primary purpose is, putting it bluntly, to kill people. Nonetheless, if you consider the Army's achievements in reaching the highest goals America has set for itself -- racial harmony, equal opportunity, a drug-free work force -- the Army has come far closer than the public schools, the university system, organized labor or virtually any other national institution, including the other armed services.

That armies can function as tools of social reform is, of course, hardly a new idea. During the Napoleonic wars, French armies energized by the revolutionary slogan "Liberty! Equality! Fraternity!" swept across Europe. The conservative European powers were forced to give in to their own social reformers, who believed that only by opening leadership

Mayweather

Continued from page 4
about this fall by many of the nation's top sportswriters on his potential as a Heisman Trophy candidate, an award that symbolizes the best in college football. It certainly is within the realm of possibility, and another opportunity for Mike Mayweather to prove he can be the best he can be here at West Point. *By Joseph Dineen, Admissions Office.*



Editor's Note: This article written by Christopher Bassford appeared in The Charlotte Observer. Bassford teaches U.S. history at Purdue University. He is the author of "The Spitshine Syndrome."

positions to talented individuals from all classes of society could their own nations' energies be tapped. This was most easily accomplished in the army, which the reformers came to call "the school of the nation." It worked, too, which is why Napoleon ended up in quiet retirement on a bleak little island in the South Atlantic. It was, after all, a reformed Prussian army that saved Wellington at Waterloo.

The U.S. Army's social impact has often been less direct, but equally dramatic. The 1944 "Servicemen's Readjustment Act," popularly known as the GI Bill, subsidized the college education of about 8 million Americans, the majority of them Army veterans. That fueled an explosive growth in the nation's university system and helped to democratize education, business and professions. Similar veterans' programs following the

Korean and Vietnam wars continued in this process.

Almost Colorblind

As for racial equality, the Army has become in many respects a model institution. It comes close to being colorblind.

Almost 15% of the Army's officers come from minority groups, more than half again the average among the other services. More than 10% are black. Although this is far below the percentage of black enlisted men (27%), it is clear that for even the very highest command positions, the Army stands for careers open to talent. Gen. Colin Powell's selection as the newest chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff may owe more to his political skills than to his military experience, but it was clearly his abilities, not his color, that played the key role in the decision.

It remains true that black soldiers tend to be heavily

concentrated in the combat specialties of infantry, armor and artillery, which are less likely to provide them with the background for a good civilian job. On the other hand, pride, leadership skills and promotions come fastest in those specialties. A 1988 report by Robert L. Phillips of Texas Tech University and Paul J. Andrisai and Thomas Dayton of Temple University showed that black veterans consistently out-earn black nonveterans.

Women also seem to be getting a fair shake in the Army. They make up roughly 11% of both the officer and enlisted ranks, and a female cadet, Kristin Baker, recently became first captain of the corps of cadets at West Point.

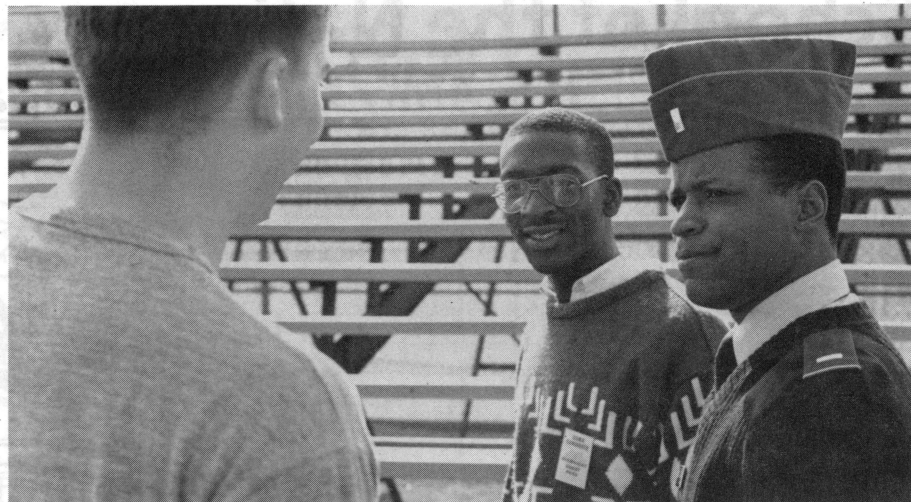
In an April 1989 survey of senior female officers conducted by Government Executive magazine, a majority still complained of discrimination but 62% said that sexual harassment is declining.

The primary obstacle facing women in the Army originates on Capitol Hill, not in the Pentagon; 67% of the female officers surveyed argued that there is no valid reason for the congressionally mandated exclusion of female soldiers from combat duties.

Resists Military Adventures

Perhaps most indicative of the Army's awareness of its responsibility to society is its leadership's restraint in advocating the use of force. While use of the Marines may be called a "raid" or an "intervention," the Army's generals appear to know that when the less-elite Army is committed, the nation is at war. Perhaps because of the experience in Vietnam, the Army has strenuously resisted military adventures, arguing that the nation must be solidly behind any decision to throw its soldiers into combat.

Harry Summers, a retired



Former Outreach Officer Pat Gaston, right, talks to cadet and West Point candidate.

infantry colonel, recently charged in The Atlantic that the Army has actually structured itself in such a manner as to discourage the nation's leaders from using it. This has been accomplished, says Summers, by making the Army's regular divisions so heavily dependent on support by reserve units, which cannot be committed to sustained combat without congressional approval, that they cannot move until the government has brought both the Congress and the voting public on board.

Given the Army's responsible performance on the social front, it is surprising that advocates of national service have not paid more attention to renewing the draft. Army Service, in addition to breaking down regional and ethnic barriers, helps to build citizenship.

The experiences inherent in training to be a soldier clearly build individual pride, self-confidence, self-discipline and physical fitness. The Army itself is a vast education machine, training thousands of soldiers every year in a wide range of skills, many of them directly transferable to the civilian world.

The Army's ruthless anti-drug campaign has not only destroyed barracks drug culture of the 1970s

but produced a force in which drug use is probably lower than in any comparable group in America. Drug-related disciplinary problems dropped by more than 75% between 1975 and 1987. Despite the persistent stereotype of the rootless, damaged Vietnam veterans have higher employment and lower crime rates than nonveterans.

Still, there are dangers in looking at the Army as a social welfare agency.

It is not the place to send criminals for rehabilitation or the illiterate for remedial education. It is the increasingly high quality of Army personnel -- 90% of new enlistees are high school graduates, in contrast to the low quality of recruits typical of the immediate post-Vietnam era -- that has made these successes in discipline, education and human relations possible.

A still greater danger may lie in the pressures being generated for radical force reductions in the wake of Soviet Leader Mikhail Gorbachev's peace offensive.

Before we start laying off soldiers simply because business looks to be slow, we should take into account the extent to which the Army is, truly, "the school of the nation."

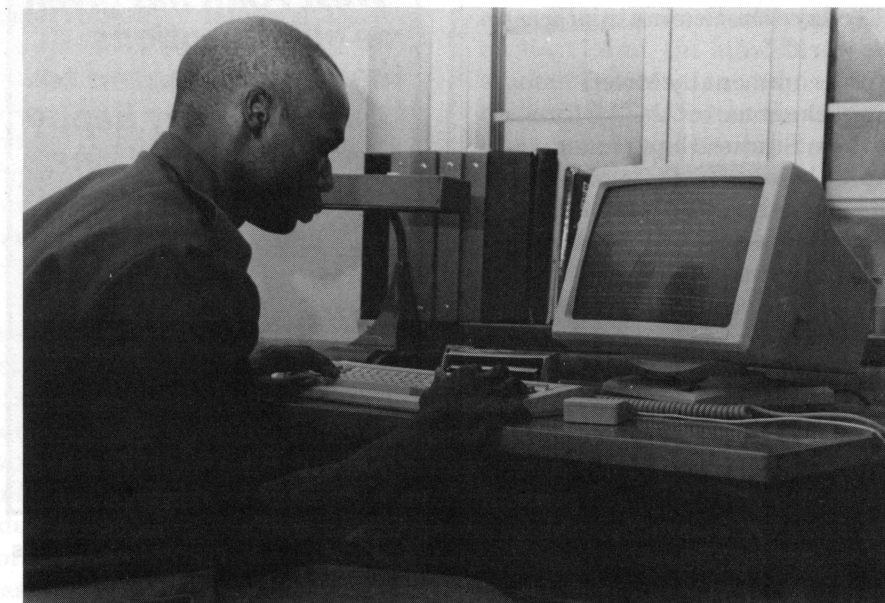
West Point thrust -- Develop "whole person"

West Point offers a unique experience with balanced emphasis on intellectual, military skill, physical and character development. Whereas most schools concentrate on the development of the mind, West Point concentrates on the "whole person."

Of course, your mind will be challenged and developed by a faculty whose primary job is to teach you. You will be able to take courses in more than 30 fields of study and 19 majors. You will also be developed militarily, physically, morally and in other areas that contribute to strong character development. You will graduate with a Bachelor of Science degree and be commissioned as a Regular Army officer, competent in the skills of your profession.

Each year, about 1,400 young men and women take advantage of the exceptional opportunity West Point offers. Around 13 percent of these exceptional young people are minorities. West Point actively recruits minorities, and seeks to reflect in each Academy class the same representation of minorities found in the nation's population. However, regardless of race or religion, West Point offers equal opportunity to all, and considers each applicant on the merit of high school achievements in academics, athletics and leadership activities.

West Pointers come from all of the United States, and represent nearly every race, religion, ethnic group and culture in the country. There are also cadets from many foreign countries. This diversity at the Military Academy enhances the educational experience for all cadets. Each member's background and point of view is taken seriously, and cadets get to know all types of other people. They are expected to learn how to



work as a team.

An excellent way to learn more about West Point is to hear what cadets have to say. The following comments are from minority cadets, men and women, talking about their West Point experience:

"A lot of personal growth has taken place since coming to West Point. Not only have I learned a lot, but I have been able to exercise more of my abilities. West Point is a humbling experience because so many people are more talented or just as talented as you are, but it also makes you work that much harder."

"One word completely describes my four years at West Point: opportunity. The opportunity to learn different academic disciplines, to travel, to meet people of different heritages and races, and to develop mentally, physically and morally. All these experiences have broadened my horizons."

"I recommend West Point for

those who know they must walk an extra mile to receive the extra benefit of discipline and sound character. However, it is not for everyone."

What type of person graduates from West Point? There are graduates who are world heroes: Grant, Lee, Jackson, Eisenhower, Pershing, Borman and others. There are also thousands of less famous graduates who have contributed much to our country and the world. Among them are David Moniac, the first Indian to attend and graduate from the Academy; Fidel V. Ramos, USMA Class of 1950, Chief of Staff in the Philippines and Vincent Brooks, the first Black American to hold the position of Brigade Commander at West Point. A graduate of the Class of 1915 was Major General Luis Raul Esteves, a Puerto Rican native who was the first in his class to achieve the rank of general officer, quite a feat considering his classmates

1LT Polanco reaches out to minority students

By Joe Dineen
Admissions Media Branch

"Today America is a microcosm of the world."

This comment by Molefi Asante, chairman of the African-American Studies Department at Temple University describes the changes that are occurring in the United States and its minority population.

In a recent article in Time magazine it was reported that one in four persons declare they are Hispanic or nonwhite today. The Hispanic population is increasing at a rate of 22 percent and by the year 2020 will have doubled to nearly 115 million. The Black population is increasing at a rate of 12 percent, while the white population is increasing at a rate of 2 percent.

In New York State about 40 percent of the elementary and secondary-school children belong to an ethnic minority and in the next 10 years that is expected to reach 50 percent. In California white students are already a minority. Hispanics account for 31.4 percent

West Point

included Eisenhower, Bradley and Van Fleet.

The list of success stories among minority USMA graduates has continued to expand, particularly during the past 20 years as the U.S. Military Academy has established programs to increase minority enrollment.

When the Class of 1993 began its own chapter of the "West Point experience", about 240 minority students were in the ranks of the 1,352 taking the oath during Reception Day. By Annebet McEliece, Media Assistant

"West Point has given me all the options that I ever wanted to have. I am very happy I have those options, not only in the military sense, but in learning how to deal with people, how to lead, how to organize, how to plan."

-- LT Miquel Polanco

of public school enrollment, blacks add 8.9% and Asians and others amount to 11% -- for a nonwhite total of 51.3%

What is the significance of this trend?

The United States was created and developed throughout its history by voluntary immigration according to Time. This process has been one of the country's strengths and the future offers a tremendous opportunity for capitalizing on the merits of many peoples from many lands. It also offers many challenges, some of them difficult because of racial tension in what will be a multi-racial land. While there may be cause for concern as this nation moves toward the year 2,000, demographer Ben Wattenberg, offers some optimism.

"There's a nice chance that the American myth in the 1990s and beyond is going to ratchet another step toward this idea that we are the universal nation. That rings the bell of manifest destiny. We're a people with a mission and a sense of purpose, and we believe we have

something to offer the world."

For 1st Lieutenant Miquel Polanco, a 1987 West Point graduate from Santurce, Puerto Rico, changes in racial demographics have been the focus of his attention for the past nine months as he served as an "Outreach Officer" for the Admissions Office at the U.S. Military Academy. It was an opportunity to help minority students.

This special temporary duty sent Polanco to more than seven states in the southwest and far west, seeking to plant a message in 7th and 8th grade youngsters about the importance of education. Additionally, he sought high quality minority high school students who were eligible for admission the U.S. Military Academy.

Colleges and universities throughout the nation are spending more dollars on personnel and time seeking qualified minority students. It is particularly important to the U.S. Military Academy because West Point provides the Army 900 to 1,000 officers a year to lead its force. It is essential that the Army have a good share of minority officers. About 15% of the Army's officer corps are minorities and more than 10% are Black. However, that number is far below the percentage of black enlisted men (27%). Consequently, it is imperative that West Point, the nation's oldest service academy, gains its fair share of qualified minority students.

The challenge and experience 1LT Polanco received as an "Outreach" officer was also quite eye-opening since he found that the importance of education among

1LT Polanco reaches out to minority students

minority students was far from universally accepted. Yet, there was a great deal of satisfaction and hope in trying to plant the education seed with 7th and 8th grade students.

"When I spoke to the junior high school students I tried to equate education to a safety net in a circus," says Polanco. "When you are walking a tightrope or in a trapeze act, it is prudent to have the safety net in case someone falls. When you are going through life and planning your future your opportunities are enhanced by having some kind of safety net underneath. That safety net will be education."

Seventh and eighth graders listen closely to this Puerto Rican native. Education is a fact of life for Miquel Polanco. His mother and father are both college graduates, as was his grandfather. A college degree was the only acceptable choice. Yet he found this is not the case when he visited small towns in Texas or New Mexico which have large Hispanic populations. Education is simply not the No. 1 priority in many cases. It was more important to have a job to support your family.

"Some parents are skeptical about education," says Polanco. "The parents may have completed ninth grade or even graduated from high school. They are working as mechanics or in another trade. If their son or daughter can do just as well or a little better than they have done, that's fine. There is less of an urgency to make college education an option."

This lack of concern about the importance of education and where it leads an individual is a major concern as these demographic

population changes move forward. Business and industry already spend millions of dollars educating the workforce because high school graduates are not prepared for the responsibilities and tasks they face in high technology industries. The importance of education will undoubtedly increase with each new technological change in industry.

When 1LT Polanco arrived at West Point a year ago he was returning to his alma mater for the first time. He knew working in admissions would provide some type of "sales" position, but he was unfamiliar with the problems in education for minorities throughout the United States. He has received quite an education. Despite the differences of opinion, Polanco continued to push the importance of a college education in the small towns in Texas, New Mexico and California.

"I try to tell students and parents about the kind of options that are open and the life you will lead if you go to college," says the West Point Outreach officer who has reported to Fort Hood, Texas for his next assignment. "I try to tell them about the options they have if they went to West Point, and the kind of life they will lead. Some have this misperception that if you graduate from West Point and go into the Army you will live like "Private Benjamin." Some students are amazed when I explain that they will be supervising people when they graduate, from 20 to 40 people. That idea does appeal to them, but we have to make it obvious to them."

During his nine-month tour at West Point, 1LT Polanco logged nearly 40,000 miles in travel,

spreading the West Point message to thousands of minority students as well as others. He discussed life at West Point, the minority student environment, explaining the facts in Spanish at times. His fluency in Spanish was a bonus and an eye-opener for some minority groups. It seemed to give them reassurance that if this young Puerto Rican lieutenant was successful, then perhaps their son or daughter could be equally successful.

In most admissions publications there is an implied message that you should come to West Point because you want a military career. That was not the case for Miquel Polanco, and he is the first to admit it. He also admits he was not always happy during his four-year West Point experience. Yet, now, as he looks back he values the experience immeasurably.

"Many people don't come here for military reasons," says Polanco. "They come here for the education, the prestige, and because if it is in your portfolio it will be helpful in the future. When you consider West Point it is one of the things you may not be sure about, but you throw yourself into it because there are other pressures ... parental pressures, the prestige, and the future. Hey, I was 17. West Point had everything that I liked, but I wasn't sure about the military, but I thought I could probably deal with it."

With three years of military experience behind him, 1LT Polanco has a more mellow viewpoint of the U.S. Military Academy than he had moments after graduation. He understands more fully the value of the experience, and how it relates to

Minority students face uphill education battle

With the rise in population rates of minorities, by the year 2,000 one of every three students will be either Black, Hispanic or Asian. The diversity of language and cultures of these minority students will present challenges unlike anything most states have seen since the great migrations of the turn of the century according to Anthony DePalma in an article in the Education Life special edition of the New York Times.

Our nation's schools will be hard pressed to prepare these Americans, many of them poor, for a more sophisticated work force. Many educational experts such as Dr. John F. Noonan, president of Bloomfield College in Bloomfield, N.J. where half of the 1,600 students are members of minorities, predict the future of the United States is at stake.

A 1988 study, entitled "One-Third of a Nation", offered some highly pessimistic conclusions. The report states that since the 1970s minorities have become comparatively poorer and increasingly segregated in distressed, urban neighborhoods where schools sometimes harbor failure. Their financial picture

grows dimmer as tuition increases leave financial aid further and further behind.

Colleges have already seen declines in a smaller percentage of minority members attending college. In 1976 the percentage of Black high school graduates who enrolled in college was 50.4. By 1988 that figure had dropped to 46.6 percent. During the same period the percentage of white students attending college has increased from 53.5 percent to 58.6 percent. Participation in college by Hispanic students also has declined. In 1976, 48.9 percent of Hispanic high school graduates were in college. That figure has slipped to 47.1 percent.

While the increase in the number of Asian immigrants attending college rose by 126 percent, there are problems in this minority group as well. The newest Asian immigrants from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos may not be able to sustain the success of previous Asian immigrants. They are much poorer; their rate of poverty, 35 percent, is as high as that for Puerto Ricans and Mexican-Americans. They also arrive with less preparation for

learning and lower expectations.

Schools throughout the nation are adjusting to the demographic changes within the minority population. Mr. DiPalma used school districts such as New Rochelle, N.Y., Holland, Mich, and East Orange, N.J. to illustrate his points.

In New Rochelle a new-arrivals program has been established in two elementary schools to handle Mexican and Salvadoran immigrants. In East Orange where schools are 98 percent Black, potential dropout students participate in a special 27-week support program, starting as early as the fourth grade.

In Holland, Mich. the school district established two bilingual programs, in Spanish and Vietnamese. College night is held in both English and Spanish. When the only high school counselor left three years ago, the district searched a full year for a bilingual-bicultural counselor as a replacement. Why was Holland, a community of 24,000 residents, forced into such measures. Twenty years ago Holland was almost completely white. Today, Dr. Ronald H. Rolph, superintendent of

another direction following the completion of his military obligation, what he has learned from his West Point experience, his time as a junior officer in the U.S. Army and the experience of talking to minority students throughout the nation, will help prepare him for the future.

"I have 20,000 things I would like to do," admits Polanco. "I am just happy to have all of these options at this point of my life."

1LT Polanco reaches out

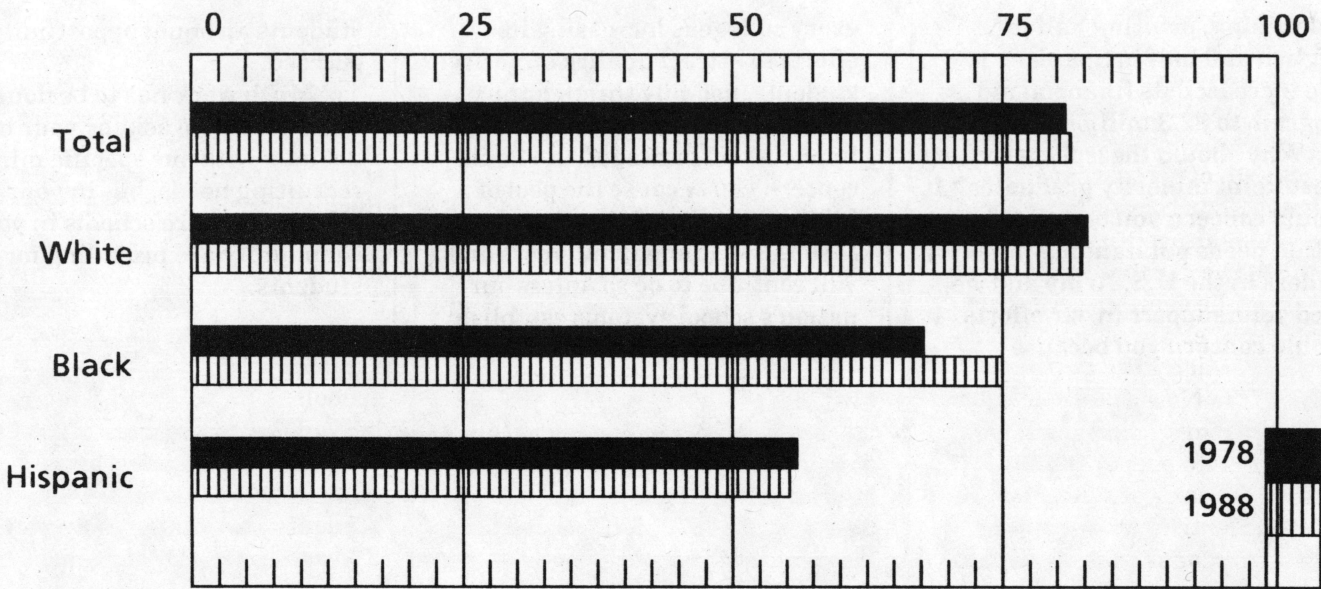
his responsibility as an officer in the U.S. Army. "It would have been fine with me if I never came back to this place after graduation," admits Polanco. "Now I have grown fond of the academy. I wish I could be back here as a cadet, knowing what I know now and feeling the way I do now because I would do it 20 times better."

"West Point has given me all of the options that I ever wanted to

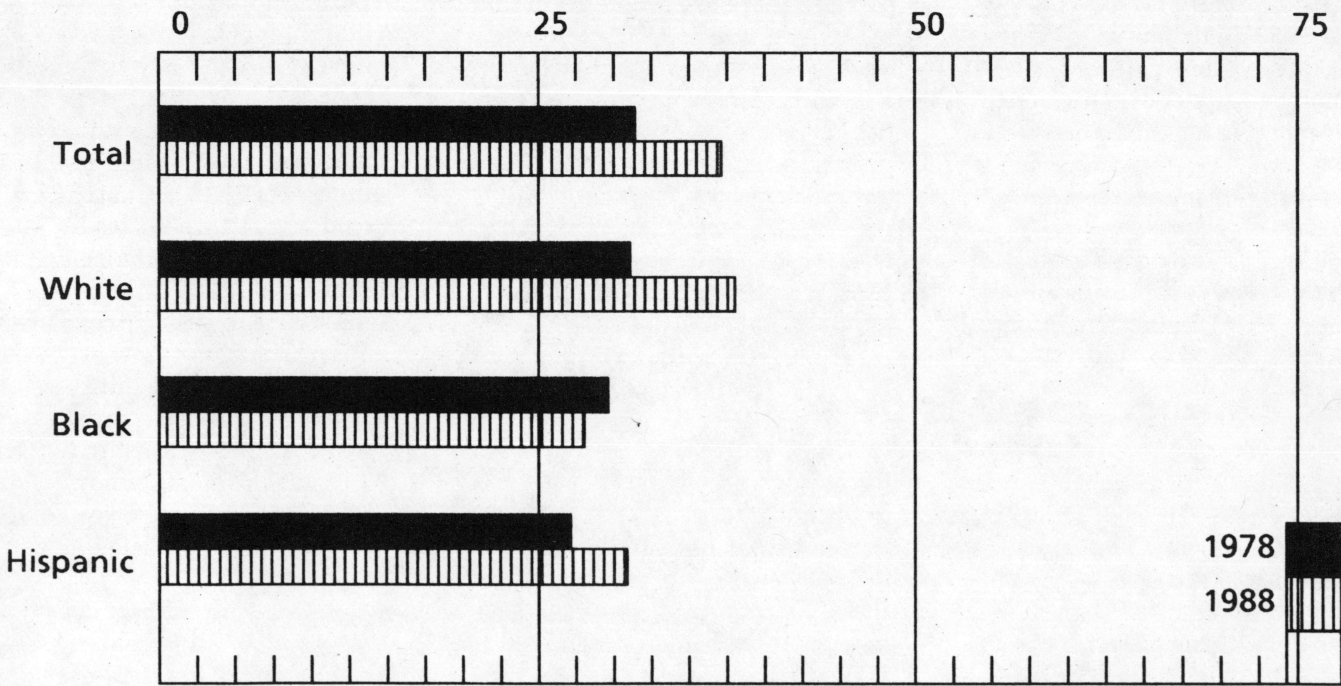
have," says the young West Point graduate. "I am very happy I have those options, not only in the military sense, but in learning how to deal with people, how to lead, how to organize, how to plan. When you are here as a cadet you wonder whether West Point is worth it. A couple of years after you leave you realize it was well worth it."

Whether or not Miquel Polanco pursues a military career or goes in

Graduated from High School
Percentage of 18-24-year olds in each group



Attended College
Percentage of 18-24-year olds in each group



schools, says 28 percent of the district's students are minorities. Most are Mexican-Americans.

There are also examples where colleges are making dramatic changes in their recruitment

efforts because of an increasing number of minority students. At Incarnate Word College in San Antonio half the student body is either Black or Hispanic. Incarnate Word has doubled its

enrollment to 2,500 since 1985 and Hispanic students take more of the new seats than white students. The Roman Catholic college spends about \$1 million a year in

Minority students

advertising, printing half in English and half in Spanish. It also increased its financial aid program to \$2.3 million a year.

Why should these facts concern West Point minority graduates? It should concern you because the nation needs outstanding minority leaders in the U.S. Army and we need your support in our efforts. It should concern you because

every college is increasing its efforts to attract quality minority students, not only through the use of advertising but by increasing its financial aid packages. It should concern you because the pool of high quality minority students we seek is dwindling in numbers and will continue to do so unless our nation's school systems establish programs that will offer minority

students an equal opportunity to succeed.

Much work has to be done. That is why we ask for your help, not only with our specific minority recruiting needs, but in your efforts to ensure schools in your community are providing for ALL students.