



## **Service Academy Nomination - General Information**

An appointment to one of the United States Service Academies is a distinct and rare honor. Acceptance of an academy appointment involves at least a nine-year service obligation, including four years at an academy and five years of active duty service. The selection process for nominations from my office is entirely merit based and is highly competitive. In order to process and review your application, we need your complete cooperation. Each Congressional office uses a unique selection process that is designed to meet its particular standards and needs. The information provided below is to help you expedite your application, so please review it carefully.

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### **• Nomination**

- You are encouraged to apply for a nomination from every available nominating source, as Sixth Congressional District nominations are highly competitive.
- For each vacancy I have at the U.S. Air Force, Naval, Military, and Merchant Marine Academies, I may nominate up to ten candidates to compete for that vacancy. Under the competitive appointment process that I use, the academies will select from my slate of nominees the one candidate they believe to be the most qualified for an appointment. The remaining nominees will then compete for other available appointments in a nationwide pool.
- Other nomination sources:
  - President Donald Trump, who nominates children of career military personnel, deceased or disabled veterans, military or civilian personnel in missing status, and Medal of Honor recipients;
  - Vice President Mike Pence, who nominates five individuals from across the United States per year;
  - The Secretary of the Army, Navy, or Air Force, who nominates members of regular military, reserve components, and participants of the ROTC; and
  - Senators Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen of Maryland.
- Since academies may award more appointments than are available through Congressional vacancies, more than one nomination is neither required nor of assistance in achieving an appointment.
- **If someone else nominates you, please notify me immediately so that I may allow other candidates the opportunity for nomination**

- **Eligibility:** To be eligible for an appointment you must meet the following requirements:
  - Must be an American citizen
  - Must be at least 17 years old and not yet 23 years old on July 1 of the year you enter an academy (25 years old for U.S. Merchant Marine Academy).
  - Must not be married, pregnant, and/or have any legal obligation to support children or other dependents.
  - Must be a legal resident of the Sixth Congressional District of Maryland (except the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy) .
  - **If you are uncertain if you meet these requirements, please contact my district office for verification.**
- **Academy Evaluation Criteria:** The academies consider evidence of character, scholarship, leadership, physical aptitude, medical fitness, personal goals, and motivation in performing each nominee's "whole-person" evaluation. These are also the criteria I use to determine nominations.
  - **Character:** Absolutely critical in the course of evaluating a candidate. Absence of good moral character is a cause for disqualification. Candidates are considered to have good moral character unless evidence exists to suggest otherwise.
  - **Scholarship:** Each element of a candidate's academic record is carefully evaluated by a service academy's admissions board. The elements evaluated include a complete high school record (and college record, when applicable), class standing, and either the SAT or ACT scores. All strengths and weaknesses in a candidate's academic background are taken into account.
  - **Leadership:** Participation and achievement in organized athletics, student body and class government, clubs and class extracurricular activities, scouting, and church or other community-related activities demonstrate evidence of leadership potential. Candidates who have found it necessary to work to provide family support are considered to have demonstrated desirable leadership potential.
  - **Physical Aptitude:** Measuring strength, endurance, agility, and coordination, the academies' fitness tests are designed to determine each candidate's readiness to undertake the rigorous athletic and physical education program at one of the academies. Each academy has its own test requirements. Results of the examination are evaluated, assigned a numerical score, and included in the whole-person evaluation by West Point, The Air Force, Naval, and Merchant Marine academies evaluate the results on a pass-or-fail basis.
  - **Medical Fitness:** A candidate who meets minimum scholastic standards will be scheduled to take a service academy qualifying medical examination at a military or civilian contract facility near the candidate's home. Although medical qualification standards vary among the academies, only one exam is required. However, different tests may be necessary depending upon the academy. Scheduling and evaluation of the exam are arranged by the Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DODMERB).
  - **Motivation:** Motivation is an intangible quality and difficult to evaluate. However, since it is most frequently the factor that determines an appointee's success or failure at a service academy, I make every effort to gauge a candidate's interest level in attending an academy and serving as an officer in the Armed Forces. Motivation may also be measured through an evaluation of correspondence, personal contacts, and care with which application materials are prepared.

- **Service Academy Questionnaires:**

- Each academy uses a questionnaire to make an initial assessment of an applicant's potential for appointment. The results of this evaluation are provided by each academy to Members of Congress to assist them in screening their applicants. If you have not already completed a pre-candidate questionnaire for each academy you are interested in, please visit their respective websites, listed below:
  - Military Academy: <http://www.usma.edu>
  - Naval Academy: <http://www.usna.edu>
  - Air Force Academy: <http://www.usafa.edu>
  - Merchant Marine Academy: <http://www.usmma.edu>

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## **Service Academy Nomination - Application**

Nominations are made competitively on the basis of the composite of the candidate's academic record, extracurricular activities, SAT scores, and an interview with the Sixth Congressional District of Maryland's Service Academy Selection Board.

- **Required Components:**

- A formal, signed motivational letter addressed to the Congressman requesting a nomination to a specific academy. This should be approximately 500 words in length.
- A resume, including but not limited to: education, extracurricular activities, volunteer work, employment, awards and achievements, and reference contacts.
- A completed application (available at <https://trone.house.gov/services/military-academy-nominations>). Formal candidacy is established upon receipt of all required parts of the application.
- Two letters of recommendation. Letters may come from teachers (from different disciplines), counselors, employers, coaches, clergy, or anyone who knows you well (non-familial). These can be sent to my office by the individual writing the recommendation letter. These can be sent through e-mail at [Trone.Academy@mail.house.gov](mailto:Trone.Academy@mail.house.gov) or by U.S. Mail to my Gaithersburg office.
- An official high school transcript. Transcripts must include your grade point average and your anticipated coursework for your senior year. These must be sent by your school to my Gaithersburg office.
- Official SAT and/or ACT scores. These scores must be sent directly from the testing agency to my office. Copies of unofficial or official test scores will not be accepted. Applicants are responsible for requesting that the scores be sent. ***These tests must be taken no later than the testing dates in October. You will not be eligible for a nomination if your SAT and/or ACT results are not received in our office by the week following the interview date.***
- An interview with the Service Academy Selection Board (usually scheduled in late November).

• **Basis for Nomination:**

- School records, including GPA and courses taken.
- Testing scores from SAT and ACT. For the most part, a competitive candidate must have SAT scores above 560 on the verbal and essay tests and above 600 on the mathematical test. If your scores do not meet the minimum requirements—especially in the math section—you are strongly encouraged to retake the SAT.
- Extracurricular activities, including work, athletics, community service, and school clubs and organizations.
- Motivation is one of the most important considerations, but it is also the most difficult to measure. To an extent, motivation is reflected in the diligence, independence, and interest the candidate shows in completing his or her file. The interview is also designed to assess an applicant's motivation.

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If your file is complete, you will be notified in early November about the scheduled time of your interview before my Service Academy Selection Board.

**Applications must be received by October 11, 2019.**

**Please direct all correspondence regarding the service academies to my Gaithersburg district office:**

Office of Congressman David Trone  
ATTN: Service Academy Nominations Officer  
9801 Washingtonian Boulevard, Suite 330  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878  
Phone: 301-926-0300  
Fax: 301-926-0324  
E-mail: [Trone.Academy@mail.house.gov](mailto:Trone.Academy@mail.house.gov)

**Should you wish to speak with someone regarding your application, or if you have any questions regarding the nominations process, please feel free to reach out to one of my Service Academy Nominations Officers**

Taylor Donoghue  
Caitlin Ainge  
Regan Riley  
Sarah Roth

