



UNITED STATES
INSTITUTE OF PEACE
Making Peace Possible

USIP's Service Academy Education and Development Initiative



"USIP was our first and always our most sought after host for our cadet internship program. Since 2012 we have sent dozens of cadets to learn about how this amazing organization works globally to prevent, mitigate and resolve conflict. They always return better equipped to understand the complexities of the world and apply their lessons learned for application in how to be more critically thinking military officers."

- John Melkon, U.S. Military Academy (West Point)

EVERY SUMMER, THE U.S. INSTITUTE OF PEACE HOSTS future military leaders for an in-residence internship with USIP regional and thematic teams. During their time at the Institute, these rising leaders work alongside a variety of experts. As a result, they broaden their perspectives, acquire new skills, learn peacebuilding techniques, and gain practical experience that informs their military careers.

USIP'S WORK

As part of its worldwide work, USIP provides education and training to those preventing conflict and promoting peace—improving their skills and broadening their knowledge so they can combat extremism and stabilize war-torn countries.

Since 2012, USIP's Service Academy Education and Development Initiative has continued this work. The initiative began through a relationship with the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, has grown with West Point's creation of the Center for the Study of Civil-Military Operations, and has expanded to include cadets and midshipmen from the U.S. Naval Academy and the U.S. Air Force Academy.

During their time with the Institute, the cadets and midshipmen promote civilian-military cooperation, work on unique research projects, and contribute to USIP's mission.

Educating Young Professionals. The Service Academy Education and Development Initiative empowers these future military leaders to be more effective in their work throughout their careers by introducing them to alternative ways of thinking about and addressing conflict.

For example, a young platoon leader is tasked with providing security in an area. How should the leader accomplish this mission? A more traditional approach might be to increase

presence, patrols, checkpoints, etc. Alternative means might include engaging with community leaders in dialogue to better understand the community's needs and options to improve security measures.

With exposure to a peacebuilding lens, these future officers may consider tactics such as the latter approach, which can lead to more sustainable security.

Broadening Perspectives & Enhancing Skills. During their time at USIP, Service Academy interns are paired with USIP regional and thematic teams based on their interests and program of study. Thematic focus areas can include gender, civ-mil relations, countering violent extremism, religion, congressional relations, and public education, while a country/regional focus might include Iran, North Korea and China, and sub-Saharan Africa.

The Institute emphasizes mutual learning throughout the internship: While Service Academy interns broaden their perspectives through differing lenses that incorporate peacebuilding tools, USIP experts learn more about the operational challenges the interns may face in the future and ask the interns to bring their military lens to the area of study.

The Institute also aims to provide a range of educational opportunities during their time at USIP. Interns have chances to represent USIP and the Service Academy during events, attend meetings on Capitol Hill, and co-author articles with experts.

Examples of articles include:

- ▶ “As Military Ties Deepen, China Advances its Ambitions in Africa”
- ▶ “After North Korea Summit, Military Cooperation Can Reduce Tensions”
- ▶ “Military Rivals: Iran and Saudi Arabia

Continuing to Improve. The ever-changing operating environment and its growing number and types of actors is likely to remain constant in the foreseeable future.

Greater awareness and understanding by all—including military leaders—is critical to increased effectiveness.

Future leaders will need to be aware of the various tools that they can use to navigate the complexity and operate successfully. USIP continues to work towards that end—connecting these future military officers with experts in peacebuilding to broaden their understanding of conflict and make them aware of the Institute as a resource as they advance in their careers.

“During their time at USIP, midshipmen gained an appreciation for the delicate and thorough process that goes into crafting foreign policy to prevent future wars and global conflict. Naval Academy midshipmen were engaged and challenged at USIP where they saw their academic interests brought to life through policy discussions and solution implementation. The internship mentors included the midshipmen in their daily work and on excursions to conferences, Capitol Hill, and briefings across D.C. Additionally, the midshipmen were afforded a unique chance to publish articles and blog posts alongside their mentors and experts in their field. The USIP internship provided the midshipmen a tremendous opportunity and will undoubtedly influence their future careers as Naval Officers.”

- Darby Yeager, U.S. Naval Academy

