



## **The Health Professions Scholarship Program**

A Guide for HPSP Students at GW

**The George Washington University  
School of Medicine and Health Sciences**



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# Welcome HPSP Students!

Congratulations! For many of you, this is the beginning of your career in medicine as well as your career in the military. This guide was created by current HPSP students at GW, faculty with military experience and also with the input of HPSP Alumni. There is a lot of information for medical students in the military and our hope is to supplement that material with some information tailored to GW students in order for you to be as well prepared as possible for the transition from medical school to military medicine.

In this guide you will find information about resources and programs available to HPSP students, scheduling recommendations to help you navigate medical school, military training, away rotations, interviews and the match, and more. We have also provided a contact list to help you connect with current and previous HPSP students in many different stages of their careers. We encourage you to reference this guide in conjunction with your branches' HPSP websites, which have been listed at the end of this document.

It is our hope that this guide assists you in your new adventures and that it continues to grow throughout the years. Remember the Military Medical Student Association and the Dean's Office are YOUR resources. Take advantage and ask questions. Best of luck!

**\*SPECIAL NOTE\*** Due to ongoing COVID-19 mitigation measures, some information within this guide may not apply directly to Academic Year 2020-21. Many GW SMHS policies are currently in flux. Please be patient and bring any specific questions to MMSA leadership.

Very Respectfully,

Chris Weston  
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Elizabeth Wood  
ENS, USN, MC

The George Washington University  
School of Medicine and Health Sciences

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# Getting Involved

## **GW Military Medical Student Association**

The GW MMSA is a student-run and university-sponsored group for GW medical students with an interest in military medicine. This typically includes HPSP students, but anyone is welcome. We host lectures from local physicians, group travel to HPSP events and keep students updated on current HPSP activities specific to the university. The group communicates primarily through a group email so it is important to be on the email list beginning your first year. MMSA Leaders are a great first-line resource for many of your questions related to military medicine. Typically you can sign up for the MMSA at the Student Activities Fair that happens in the fall of your first year, or by reaching out to current MMSA leadership. Rising MS2s usually assume leadership around February. If you are unable to get signed up, visit the Dean's Office or Student Groups website to determine who the current leaders are.

## **Facebook HPSP Group**

This is the unofficial forum for HPSP students nationwide and an excellent resource to exchange information between current HPSP students and residents. Some find getting reliable information from recruiters or your respective branches cumbersome, so this group is a valuable alternative. However, take what you read with a grain of salt because policies change, and what worked in one year may not work in another.

## **Student Doctor Network**

This is a nonprofit website designed to help build a diverse doctor workforce by providing free advising resources, tools, and peer-support forums to those who would otherwise not have access to such services. It consists of nearly 700k members whose diverse membership spans from high school students to attending physicians. The military forums can be particularly useful but make sure you narrow your search by date so as to not find outdated information.

## **CAP (Clinical Apprenticeship Program)**

At the beginning of the first semester each student is assigned to a physician preceptor. Throughout preclinicals the student spends time with that preceptor in his or her clinical setting. The CAP office will send a questionnaire to all MS1s within the first few months wherein you can opt to be paired with a military preceptor, however you are under no obligation to do so. The other question typically asked is whether you would like your CAP to be in an emergency

department. If you would like to be paired with a military preceptor, it is critical that you get a valid CAC ASAP (for more information, *First Year* below). If your CAP preceptor works at one of the nearby military hospitals, there are additional steps beyond obtaining a CAC that must be completed in order to be cleared to work. Check with MMSA leadership for details.

## **Big Sibs**

The Big Sib program begins prior to your first year at GW. After completing a survey from the Dean's Office, you will be matched with another student, your "Big Sib," enrolled in the class year ahead of you. Your Big Sib is a great resource for you to help answer your questions and introduce you to the life of a GW medical student. If you would like to be paired with a military or HPSP student, simply indicate that on your survey and the Dean's Office will do its best to accommodate.

## **GW Military and Veterans Services**

GW Military and Veterans Services is a one-stop-shop for all things veteran. They provide undergraduate and graduate student veterans, dependents, and military personnel services such as benefit processing and supportive community-building activities. If you are using any GI Bill benefits, they are your best friend. They are located on the Marvin Center ground floor. Additionally, they have an impressive military community center at 2035 F St. NW. Drop in and say hello when you get a chance. GW MMSA will occasionally do joint volunteer work and happy hours so be on the lookout. It's highly suggested you get on their Dog Tags newsletter mailing list.

## **Scholarly Concentrations**

GWSMHS offers nine scholarly concentrations to all its medical students. There is no requirement to participate, but doing so offers a unique perspective above and beyond the general curriculum, and a good way to explore career options and network. Be aware, there are requirements for students doing a concentration that may compete with your time, including summer between first and second year. For military students there is an added bonus: check to see if your officer training will count as credit for this summer requirement.

## **USUHS**

GW MMSA has worked hard to partner with DC-area medical schools, including the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS) located in Bethesda, MD. Our student affiliates at USUHS have access to military faculty and training that is unparalleled, and are generous enough to often invite GW MMSA students to attend either virtually or in-person. MMSA will keep you abreast of these opportunities as they come.

## **CORDEM**

The Council of Emergency Medicine Residency Directors. This website has EXCELLENT guides for the military match process. While it is specific to emergency medicine, much holds true for other specialties as well.

## **Active Duty Training**

As an HPSP participant you are eligible for 45 days of Active Duty Training (ADT) for every year in the program. You can only take one ADT per fiscal year (a fiscal year runs from 1 October of one year to 30 September of the next). During an ADT period, your stipend stops and you receive active duty pay and entitlements. Ideally, ADT during your first year is used for ODS (Navy), BOLC-A/DCC (Army), or Air Force training and during your 2nd-4th years it should be used for clinical clerkship. You can also put in for "school orders", in which you continue your normal routine and receive full active duty pay and benefits at the appropriate rank. You CANNOT go overseas or on vacation while on school orders. You can still go on weekend excursions in your local area, but you must stay within 300 miles of your school.

Note: Clinical clerkships are usually 2-4 weeks and school orders can be used to complete the remaining time of the 45 day ADT requirement. ADT Requests must be submitted 6-8 weeks prior to the start time of your ADT.

# Current GW MMSA Membership

**Faculty Advisor: Dr. Phil Zapanta, MD**

Specialty: ENT

Email: [pzapanta@mfa.gwu.edu](mailto:pzapanta@mfa.gwu.edu)

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# Medical School Timeline

## **First Year**

Work as hard as possible before medical school begins to complete the initial HPSP process with your recruiters. This includes all applicable paperwork, swearing in, and getting your CAC. Google “nearest CAC offices” to find a location near you where you can schedule an appointment, and check with them to confirm what paperwork is needed. Not only will it keep you distracted if you have to knock these tasks out later, but you will only receive a stipend back-dated from the day you swear-in. If you have received two LES’s and still have not received your bonus, contact your HPSP finance manager. Keep a running tally of all medical school expenses for reimbursement, including student health insurance (see branch-specific information below), but be aware there is a time limit wherein you can apply for reimbursement. Also, be aware that reimbursements are significantly delayed right now. Then, contact your HPSP manager to schedule your summer training. At some point in your first year, find your nearest branch installation and a location where you can log on using your CAC to access your email and pay website. Finally, before your summer training begins, purchase your uniform either online or from the nearest military installation. Reach out to MMSA for any and all questions. However, the most important objective in your first year is to *pass your classes!*

## **Second Year**

Much of what applies to the first year applies to the second, with the exception of STEP preparation. Ideally you will have knocked out officer training and spent the rest of the summer relaxing so you can hit the ground running in August. Many students also use the summer to take on research projects, complete concentration requirements, or catch up on studying. But the most important thing is to enter second year mentally, emotionally, and physically prepared.

## **Third Year and Fourth Year**

### ***3rd Year Rotations***

It is highly recommended that you try and work with the military team at the VA during your Internal Medicine Month. Third year rotations are required to be at GW-affiliated hospitals and there are limited military experiences available, so it is important to utilize your time well. There are two months of Internal Medicine spent at two different hospitals. It is highly recommended that you spend one of those months at the DC VA Hospitals (VA). There is a team that consists of residents from Walter Reed and that often has attendings with military experience. For your Family Medicine (FM) rotation, you can request Fort Belvoir where a lot of Walter Reed



residents rotate as well. This is slightly different from other FM sites because it also includes an inpatient component. This is a good place to rotate if you are interested in FM because the scope of practice for FM providers is much broader in the military than in the civilian sector on the East Coast. Both the VA and Fort Belvoir are great opportunities to get to know residents who have been through the military match, may have done GMO tours and may even be your future colleagues. You should still at least rotate through the VA, especially if you are interested in doing residency at Walter Reed because you may end up doing rotations there as a resident. If you are able to work with a military attending physician, try to get a LOR from them. As you can imagine, LORs from military physicians carry a little more “weight” in the application process.

### ***Away Rotations***

During the middle of your third year you will be able to apply to away rotations to different military hospitals. The best way to find out when applications are accepted is by attending the USUHS-sponsored Specialty Night. Walk up to the representatives, express interest in their program, and ask how best to apply. Some will tell you very generic information but others will give the direct contact person or even offer to have you reach out to them directly if you are not making any headway via the normal means. Otherwise, some programs will send you a date that you can begin applying while others you will just need to contact beginning in December to see what spots they have and to give them your dates and top rotation choices. There is no universal application for rotations- each specialty in each branch is different. It is recommended to do your away rotations early in fourth year. Most students take Step 2 right after third year ends and go straight into an away rotation with the goal of obtaining a LOR from that program. In addition, you typically can interview for residency during those rotations so you want to make sure you rotate at a time that they are holding interviews and each program stops interviewing at different times so go early to be on the safe side!

### ***Interviews***

The Dean's office offers mock interviews for 4<sup>th</sup> year students which typically occur for most students in September-October which is after many of your military interviews. If you would like to do a mock interview (highly recommended) you will need to contact them as early as June-July because you will be doing interviews in August and the summer is a very busy time.

### ***The Match***

The military residency match is revealed in mid-December, which is earlier than the regular match so you will need to be on top of the application process. In June or July of your fourth year, you will receive information from your HPSP contact regarding the residency application process. At this time you should also receive a document with the results of last year's match including how many slots were available for each specialty (by PGY), how many applicants to each spot, and similar information. This can help give some insight on whether specialties are

expanding vs contracting, how many people were able to go straight through vs GMO, and how many fellowships were awarded.

### ***Post Match***

YOU DID IT!!!! YAYYYYYY! You are hopefully now worry free and get to tell all your classmates (who are sick of Interview Season) that you have matched! Take a breath.... Most programs will not really start sending you onboarding information/ tasks until February/ March. Program coordinators appear to be much better at keeping in contact than our normal HPSP offices. After graduation, the school usually hosts a Promotion Ceremony for its military students. At this Ceremony, students say the Oath and then sign the Oath of Office, which must be cosigned by another officer.

## Branch-Specific Information

The Army, Navy, and Air Force HPSP programs are complex, varied, and subject to constant change. We did our best in this guide to offer useful information that is common to all branches. For further information regarding your branch, go through publicly available information online first, then the MMSA contacts listed in this guide as well as your chain of command.

### **Army**

Main website:

<https://www.goarmy.com/rpi/amedd/hpsp.html>

Chain of Command:

Defense Health Headquarters

Office of the Surgeon General of the Army

ATTN: OTSG-PSZ-M

7700 Arlington Blvd

Falls Church, VA 22042

[usarmy.ncr.hqda-otsg.mbx.otsg-ume@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.ncr.hqda-otsg.mbx.otsg-ume@mail.mil)

FAX 703-681-8044

Phone 1-877-MED-ARMY

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Student Advisors

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P-Z: Ms. Wilson

703-681-0411

[michelle.wilson1.civ@mail.mil](mailto:michelle.wilson1.civ@mail.mil)

## **Navy**

Main website:

<https://www.med.navy.mil/Pages/InfoViewPage.aspx?ItemID=34>

Navy HPSP “Current Students” Page with the Navy HPSP Student Guide:

<http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/navmedmpte/accessions/Pages/CurrentStudents.aspx>

Chain of Command:

Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

7700 Arlington Blvd.

Ste 5113

Falls church, Va 22042-5113

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## **Air Force**

Main website:

<http://www.airforce.com/benefits/commissioned-officer-education/>

Air Force HPSP AFIT page and Student Portal Access:

<https://cip.afit.edu/CIP/>

Air Force HPSP “Unofficial” Student Guide:

<http://lukeballard.tripod.com/HPSP.html>

Program Manager:  
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## Terms to Know

ADT- Active Duty for Training

CAC- Common Access Card

BOLC- Basic Officer Leader Course (BOLC-B) (Army)

DCC- Direct Commission Course (BOLC-A) (Army)

DTS- Defense Travel System

GMO- General Medical Officer

HPSP- Health Professions Scholarship Program

LES- Leave and Earnings Statement

LOR- Letter of Recommendation

ODS- Officer Development School (Navy)

PCS- Permanent Change of Station

PGY- Post-Graduate Year

TDY- Temporary Duty

USUHS- Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

VA- Department of Veterans Affairs