THE COAST GUARD’S STRATEGIC VISION FOR THE U.S. COAST GUARD ACADEMY 2023-2027
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MEMORANDUM

Congratulations to the entire Coast Guard Academy team on the fantastic progress made on actioning reference (a)! As we chart our course for the next four years, the rate of change is accelerating, and we must keep pace. As stated in the Coast Guard Strategy, cadets entering our Service through the gates of New London must continue to embody our Core Values, our Ethos, and our sense of service of the Nation. They must also be prepared for the vital role they will play in our Service as members of our diverse officer corps and as change agents for our inclusive culture.

I have enclosed The Coast Guard’s Strategic Vision for the Coast Guard Academy 2023-2027 to help align the Academy’s accession programs with our broader Service needs. The Vision’s three Strategic Imperatives are: Develop and Prepare Tomorrow’s Commissioned Officers, Enhance the Coast Guard’s readiness for Tomorrow, and Ensure the Academy is Ready for Tomorrow. These three imperatives are deeply inter-related, and I encourage you to pursue them simultaneously in every initiative you undertake over the next four years. As you do so, I ask that you engage the Academy stakeholders, faculty, staff, cadets, and tenant commands, including the Leadership Development Command, in this collaborative effort.

I am inspired and energized with each visit to the Coast Guard Academy. I look forward to working with you as you develop the future leaders of our service.

L.L. Fagan, ADM CCG
Coast Guard Strategic Vision for the Coast Guard Academy 2023-2027

Tomorrow looks different. So will we. The transformation starts here.

The Coast Guard Academy’s Value to the Nation

Every officer passes through the gates of the Coast Guard Academy (CGA) campus on their journey to becoming a commissioned officer. Within CGA itself, the 200-week program provides cadets with a foundational Bachelor of Science degree based on a broad core curriculum in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, as well as the fundamentals of leadership, seamanship, ethics, critical thinking, and military service needed to assume their role once commissioned. Our Coast Guard officer corps relies on CGA to deliver commissioned graduates with these foundations alongside the diversity of experience, educational focus, background, and skills of officers from other accession sources. CGA is pivotal to the long-term success and health of the Coast Guard officer corps and the Coast Guard. As the only institution of higher education and scholarship within the Coast Guard and Department of Homeland Security, CGA is positioned to drive innovation, research, rigorous scholarly thought, and advanced education for the future of the Coast Guard as well as the homeland security enterprise.

In June 2022, the Commandant promulgated the Commandant’s Intent for the Service stating, “Tomorrow looks different. So will we. Guided by our values, history, and shared sense of belonging in the Service, we will: Transform our Total Workforce, Sharpen our Competitive Edge, and Advance Mission Excellence.” The Coast Guard Strategy followed, and built upon, the Commandant’s Intent in October 2022. This renewed Strategic Vision, aligns CGA institutional outcomes to support those of the broader Service.
The Coast Guard Academy’s Value to the Nation Continued

With all future officers beginning their journey on its campus, CGA is uniquely positioned to collaborate with the Coast Guard’s Leadership Development Center to create the foundation for officer leadership to transform the workforce and prepare the Coast Guard for the challenges of the future. Competition for talent becomes more intense every year, and CGA must find new and innovative ways to recruit and retain America’s best and brightest. Looking different in the future requires the Coast Guard to think differently as well, and the foundations of thinking start with a world-class learning environment. Advancing the Coast Guard’s mission excellence means operating in new ways, while remaining “brilliant at the basics.” For the future members of the Coast Guard’s officer corps, being “brilliant at the basics” starts during their officer accession training conducted on campus at CGA. CGA must continue to mature its processes to remain competitive within the landscape of higher education.

This document serves as a strategic vision for CGA. It will be realized through directed action promulgated by the Deputy Commandant for Mission Support. The Superintendent will, in turn, develop more detailed annual action plans accompanied by appropriate milestones and metrics to track success. These plans should be developed collaboratively across the CGA community and with key stakeholders throughout the Coast Guard-specifically the Coast Guard Academy Board of Trustees—to transform this Strategic Vision into tangible results.
INCREASED COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS

America’s college-bound population is declining which increases competition for students. Further compounding this problem, the number of individuals with a propensity and ability to serve in the military or through other public service is decreasing. These trends impact CGA’s ability to recruit and retain America’s top talent necessary to build a diverse cadet corps that is reflective of the Nation we serve.

RAPID ADVANCEMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY

The pace of innovation within the technology sector is accelerating and profoundly impacting the way that Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) curricula are delivered as well as how the Coast Guard will use technology in the future. Maintaining technological leadership at CGA is crucial to the Coast Guard’s service to Nation. Accordingly, investments must be made to best position CGA to cultivate tomorrow’s Leaders of Character with the latest STEM capabilities, combined with the moral foundation and compassion to make sound, responsible decisions.
A shrinking American workforce, combined with changing employee-employer expectations, contributes to the challenges and barriers that CGA must address to attract and retain the faculty and staff necessary to train, mentor, and educate the officers of tomorrow. As pay increases and talent management approaches modernize faster in the private sector and other higher education institutions than in the Coast Guard, competition for talented faculty and staff intensifies. Together, CGA and the Coast Guard must seek opportunities for changes in the Service’s human resource systems to ensure we are able to attract, hire, and retain the workforce needed to maintain our status as one of the top institutions of higher education in the nation.
Strategic Imperative 1: Develop and Prepare Tomorrow’s Commissioned Officers

Transform Our Total Workforce

To meet the challenges of tomorrow, Coast Guard officers must be dynamic, adaptive, and inclusive. The long-term success of the Coast Guard depends on recruiting and retaining America’s most in-demand talent; CGA must develop innovative approaches to recruit the portion of the college-bound population that qualify for service and have a propensity to serve. To serve the growing diversity of our nation, CGA must also build a diverse and culturally competent organization. As the operating environment of higher education and of the Coast Guard continue to evolve, CGA must adapt its approaches to ensure we continue to graduate Service-ready officers that meet the needs for the Coast Guard, today and in the future.

- Deploy innovative and adaptive recruiting and marketing practices to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the Corps of Cadets.
- Employ a modern and holistic approach to develop Service-ready officers who are leaders of character that embody a sense of service in fulfilling the Coast Guard’s mission.
- Enhance cultural competence across the CGA community to expand a sense of belonging and deliver officers able to interact effectively with people from across cultures.
Strategic Imperative 2:
Enhance the Coast Guard’s Readiness for Tomorrow

Sharpen Our Competitive Edge

To look different tomorrow, we must start by thinking differently today; that thinking starts with investment in education and scholarship. As the only institution of higher education within the Coast Guard and the Department of Homeland Security, CGA is optimally situated to shape the future of the Service and the Department. The intellectual development of the workforce of the future requires creative and critical analysis, strategic thinking, ethical decision-making, geopolitical awareness, scientific understanding, technical and technological competence, and resource management acuity. CGA is a rich source of intellectual capability, ranging from faculty scholarship to cadet-led research. These activities are central to a vibrant institution of learning, directly benefit our Service and Department, and create the necessary environment for a modern institution of higher education. To drive innovation in the fleet, we must invest in and advance our intellectual resources. CGA provides valuable research and insights to the Coast Guard; further leveraging this capability will enhance the Coast Guard’s ability to remain prepared for the myriad challenges that may arise in the future.

- Leverage CGA’s role as an intellectual resource to advance the Coast Guard’s ability to address critical national security and global challenges.
- Prioritize data-driven education and scholarship to help the Coast Guard develop better methodologies for integrating data into business and operational decisions.
Strategic Imperative 3:
Ensure the Academy is Ready for Tomorrow

Advance Our Mission Excellence

To action this Strategic Vision CGA requires the infrastructure, technology, and resources necessary to develop the next generation of Coast Guard leaders. To ensure that the Coast Guard and CGA retain a competitive edge, we must invest in technology and critical infrastructure to keep pace with advances in STEM education as well as Coast Guard mission execution. To develop tomorrow’s officer corps, CGA must start by becoming an employer of choice-capable of recruiting top faculty and staff while supporting and bolstering resilience across the entire CGA workforce. As with the rest of the Service, CGA must also modernize its talent management systems to meet the demands of a today’s-and tomorrow’s-workforce. Beyond its people, CGA must employ a future-focused approach that leverages data as a strategic asset. CGA must optimize its use of technology to empower its workforce and enhance program delivery.

- Build the lifecycle business case to invest in the technology and infrastructure necessary for a top tier learning environment to properly attract, recruit, develop, educate, and commission officers to lead in a complex, dynamic world.
- Become an employer of choice to attract and retain the high performing civilian and military workforce needed to lead the way to develop Service-ready officers.
- Advance a future-focused, integrated approach to operational and resource management that embraces data as a strategic asset.
- Engage in continuous improvement to offer a world-class curriculum.
- Reinforce CGA’s Athletics program.
- Advance Teaching and Learning across CGA.
Conclusion

The Coast Guard Academy is nearing 100 years in its location on the shores of the Thames River in New London, CT. As the home of the officer corps, every future officer passes through the Academy’s gates on their journey to becoming an officer and leader in the Coast Guard. Relying on our core values, the Academy must be a consistent and dependable force moving the Coast Guard into the future. This Strategic Vision is the seminal document for setting the Academy on a path to not only ensure the Academy’s success for the next 100 years, but also the Coast Guard’s success. The transformation of the Coast Guard starts here.