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The Reserve Officers' Training Corps and the Army National Guard

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### Abstract

The Army's ROTC Program helps the Army National Guard fill its ranks with well trained and knowledgeable Second Lieutenants. The Army ROTC program offers the Guaranteed Reserve Forces Duty (GRFD) Program for Cadets who want to serve in the Army National Guard. The GRFD Program is designed to attract Cadets who are interested in obtaining a commission in the Army National Guard.

## The Reserve Officers' Training Corps and the Army National Guard

Colleges and Universities have been conducting military training as far back as 1819. This military training did not become a Federal program until June 3, 1916, when President Woodrow Wilson signed the National Defense Act of 1916 officially establishing the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC). Army ROTC is the military's largest officer producing program, it has commissioned over a half-million Second Lieutenants since its inception. During the 1969-1970 school year, the ROTC commissioned over 16,500 Second Lieutenants alone, this was the largest commissioning ever. Today, the ROTC commissions approximately 3,500 Second Lieutenants each year. (Unknown, 2007)

Women were first into Army ROTC in 1972. The first group of females were commissioned in 1976, a total of 150 were commissioned. Women traditionally constitute 20 percent of the Corps of Cadets and more than 15 percent of the commissionees. (Unknown, 2007)

The Simultaneous Membership Program is a training program that allows Army National Guard enlisted members to participate in the Army Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Program. Army ROTC is a college elective that teaches students leadership theory as well as practical Soldiering skills. During ROTC, students learn the importance of teamwork and how to work together in various real-life situations. The SMP is designed for contracted Cadets who are juniors or seniors taking the advanced level ROTC courses. The main intent is to increase officer accession into the Army National Guard by increasing ROTC enrollment from enlisted ARNG members who are attending colleges and universities. The SMP also reinforces training on the role of the commissioned officer in the Army and gives Cadets the experience of working with Noncommissioned Officers and Soldiers. (USACC, 2006)

Eligibility is broken down into numerous areas. Prospective SMP Cadets must be fully contracted into the ROTC Advance Course. They must be U.S. citizens, meet height and weight standards, be physically fit, maintain at least a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA), and eligible for enlistment in, or already assigned to an ARNG unit as an Officer Trainee. Cadets must also have completed an SMP agreement, be of good moral character, and completed Basic Training or equivalent if enlisted in ARNG unit prior to enrollment in ROTC. Recipients of “Green to Gold” scholarships, Warrant Officers, and Basic Course Cadets are ineligible to become SMP Cadets.

ARNG Soldiers wanting to participate in the Simultaneous Membership Program need to set up an interview with their school’s Professor of Military Science (PMS). The PMS will ensure that the prospective Cadet is currently assigned to ARNG unit or Troop Program Unit (TPU) and that they are eligible for enrollment into the SMP. The PMS will secure the SMP agreement (DA Form 4824-R) before the Cadet contracts with the ROTC program. The Soldier must also set up an interview with the TPU Commander. The TPU Commander will ensure that Soldiers entering into the SMP are supervised and mentored by Commissioned Officers within their organization. The PMS and TPU Commander must maintain contact to ensure that the SMP Cadet continues to develop as leader in both organizations. (USACC, 2006)

Participating in the SMP is beneficial to the Soldier and the ARNG. It gives ARNG Soldiers the opportunity to gain both a college degree and a commission into the Army as a Second Lieutenant, 100 percent tuition assistance, an ROTC stipend, and drill pay as an E-5 Sergeant. This means that you will earn \$245 per month during the school year, as well as E-5 active duty pay for ARNG Annual Training (AT). In addition, you will earn a monthly allowance as an ROTC Cadet during the academic year. The tax-free allowance is \$450 per month during your junior year and \$500 per month in your senior year. (U.S. Army, 2003)

The ARNG has several different types of scholarships available to Soldiers within its ranks. No less than one hundred, two and three year ROTC scholarships are allocated each year. There is also a scholarship program available for students wishing to serve exclusively in the Army National Guard. The Dedicated Army National Guard Scholarship Program offers numerous two-year ROTC scholarships each year. Upon graduation and commissioning as a Second Lieutenant in the Army National Guard, scholarship recipients incur an eight-year military service obligation. This scholarship program pays 100 percent of tuition and fees up to \$20,000 per school year. In addition, scholarship recipients receive a generous book allowance. The Montgomery GI Bill may not be used with this program. (USACC, 2006)

The Army ROTC program offers the Guaranteed Reserve Forces Duty (GRFD) Program for Cadets who want to serve in the Army National Guard. The GRFD Program is designed to attract Cadets who are interested in obtaining a commission in the Army National Guard. Cadets electing the GRFD Program can compete for a GRFD Scholarship that pays 100 percent of tuition and fees up to \$20,000 per school year. In addition, scholarship recipients receive a \$900 annual allowance for books. Cadets are required to participate in the Simultaneous Membership Program (discussed previously), and may receive Montgomery GI Bill benefits if otherwise eligible. Upon graduation, Cadets are commissioned and incur a military service obligation of eight years in the Army National Guard. (U.S. Army, 2003)

## References

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