Dear Friends of Warrior-Scholar Project,

We all experienced unique challenges in 2020. Rather than list what was different for Warrior-Scholar Project last year, allow me to share some key things that stayed consistent.

First and foremost, hundreds of enlisted service members and veterans received world-class college preparatory programming through our academic boot camps, even in our new virtual environment. They joined from every branch of service and every stage of transition, representing 33 states. They came with ambitions to pursue a diverse array of degrees at schools throughout the country, and they left our boot camps equipped with the tools and capabilities to succeed in those pursuits.

Collaborating with 20 higher education partners, we even expanded our offerings by launching new programs with Williams College and the California Institute of Technology, as well as renewing our partnership with the University of Michigan. Leveraging the flexibility of virtual programming, we offered our first-ever December STEM course in partnership with Yale University, and conducted regular half-day virtual college preparatory workshops for community college students.

Internally, we refer to the WSP program alumni fellows who instruct and mentor boot camp students as our “secret sauce.” A huge part of our success last year, as with every year for the past decade, was attributable to their tenacity, esprit de corps, and commitment to service.

Maintaining the WSP impact in 2020 was no small feat, and our success is a testament to the staff, board, advisors, volunteers, and supporters that make it possible.

Now, we look to the future as we bring our three-year strategic plan, adopted by our board in December 2020, to life. We are committed to removing barriers to academic and career success, especially for those from underserved and marginalized communities. We are building on our core competencies, providing enhanced services to alumni as they pursue graduate studies and enter the workforce. We are offering transition support programs like our Women Veteran Empowerment Dialogues.

The future for WSP is bright. Thank you for your enduring support.

Sincerely,

Ryan Pavel
2020 HIGHLIGHTS

218 veterans were served by our 2020 boot camps

20 college and university campuses across the country hosted our boot camps

19 weeks of humanities boot camp programs

7 weeks of STEM boot camp programs

104 veterans were served by our 2020 community college workshops

2020 ACADEMIC BOOT CAMP

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

Amherst College
Calif. Institute of Technology
Columbia University
Cornell University
Georgetown University
Harvard University
Mass. Institute of Technology
Princeton University
Syracuse University
Texas A&M University
UNC-Chapel Hill
University of Arizona
University of California, Irvine
University of Chicago
University of Michigan
University of Notre Dame
University of Pennsylvania
University of Southern California
Williams College
Yale University

Maxwell Martin, U.S. Marine Corps
2019 WSP Columbia
2020-21 WSP Mobile Training Team Fellow
Currently attending Columbia University
**EMPOWERING VETERANS AND SERVICE MEMBERS TO SUCCEED IN THE CLASSROOM**

**WHAT WE DO**
In partnership with top colleges and universities, Warrior-Scholar Project (WSP) hosts intensive, one and two-week college-preparatory academic boot camps for enlisted veterans and transitioning service members. Boot camps are offered in three disciplines: Humanities, STEM, and Business & Entrepreneurship.

Through faculty lectures, workshops and research projects, tailored assignments, and one-on-one tutoring, warrior-scholars acquire the skills to succeed in higher education and navigate the cultural shift from military service to college. Throughout the course, warrior-scholars are mentored by student veterans who have successfully transitioned from the military to college.

WSP also offers workshops tailored to address the unique needs of veterans enrolled in community colleges and targeted programming for marginalized veterans, such as our Women Veterans Empowerment Dialogues. All programming is provided at no cost.

**OUR MISSION**
Our mission is to empower enlisted veterans and service members and amplify their voices as civic leaders by providing them with (1) a skill bridge that enables a successful transition to the classroom by making them informed consumers of higher education and increasing their confidence to apply to and complete rigorous degree programs at top-tier institutions, and (2) sustained support throughout their pursuit of higher education and into the workforce.

**OUR VISION**
Our vision is to ensure that every degree-seeking enlisted veteran and transitioning service member succeeds in the transition to higher education and beyond.
Helping Veterans Achieve Success in Community College and Beyond

Many student veterans start their higher education journeys at community colleges. Our programs ensure they don't stop there.

What was your educational experience prior to WSP?

I had just completed two years at a community college. Though I earned good grades, I struggled to maintain. My study skills were inefficient, and my time management was poor. Like most students, I struggled with imposter syndrome. Even after I was accepted to Stanford, the imposter syndrome was still there. In fact, it had intensified. As the courses got harder, my confidence in my academic abilities plummeted.

Did you participate in any sort of virtual learning before? If so, how does your WSP experience compare to that?

At the beginning of the year, I was attending classes in person at a community college. Due to the pandemic, the classes were abruptly shifted to an entirely online format for the final two and a half months. The instructors struggled with technology and adjusting instruction plans on the fly. The students struggled with the changes and distractions. It was certainly a difficult transition. WSP, on the other hand, provided necessary instruction prior to the course to ensure all participants were on the same page. All the instructors, lecturers, and fellows were excellent at navigating the virtual format. In addition, they were so engaging and accessible, they created an environment that was, in some ways I’d argue, better than in-person programming. Each participant received so much attention, and different avenues to have their voice heard. It was a challenging and rewarding experience!

What have you learned from WSP that you think will be helpful as you pursue your degree at Stanford?

Being able to process and analyze an enormous amount of information in a short period of time is a newly found skill that I see serving as a pillar of my success as I move forward on my academic path.

Did WSP have any effect on how confident you feel as a student?

I applied for WSP with the intent of improving my study skills and my writing abilities. Not only did I accomplish those goals, but I also grew in ways I didn’t expect. I honestly feel ready to tackle any academic challenge that lies ahead.

Community College Workshops

In previous years, our community college workshops were full-day workshops held on site at a host community college, taught by a veteran peer instructor to help enlisted veterans increase their confidence while enrolled in community college. In 2020, as a result of the pandemic, we pivoted to hold half-day virtual workshops once a month during the spring and fall college semesters, taught by WSP alumnus Luis Cornejo Miramontes.

After the Georgetown WSP humanities course, I realized I have the potential to not only get accepted into a university but also do well in class.


From Community College to Stanford

WSP gave U.S Army veteran Josh Davenport the confidence to make the transition.
### The Warrior-Scholar Project Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98% of 2020 participants agreed that they have improved their ability to organize their ideas about a text they've read and write about them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEM</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99% of 2020 participants agreed that the problem-solving skills they learned during their WSP STEM boot camp are valuable learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>98% of 2020 participants agreed that they felt better equipped for the expectations of college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99% of 2020 participants would recommend our programs to other veterans and servicemembers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>97% of 2020 participants agreed that they are more informed consumers of higher education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>96% of 2020 participants agreed that they are capable of more than they thought before attending WSP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>93% of 2020 participants gained confidence to apply to colleges previously thought out of reach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Harry Foster, U.S. Marine Corps, WSP Saddleback Community College Workshop & WSP Columbia (both in 2019), 2021 WSP Mobile Training Team Fellow, currently attending Columbia University as a 2021 Mellon-Mays Undergraduate Fellow**
Warrior-Scholar Project Long-Term Outcomes

115,000
Veterans transition from the military to higher education every year, out of 200,000 who separate from the military.

1%
of the total undergraduate populations of Top 20 schools are veteran students, according to a report by IVMF.

72%
nationwide student veterans have completed or are on track to complete a college degree, according to a report by SVA/IVMF.

32%
of WSP alumni who responded to the alumni survey are enrolled at or have graduated from Top 20 institutions.

90%
of WSP alumni who completed the alumni survey have completed or are on track to complete a college degree.

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“Warrior-Scholar Project was an awesome experience. The planning, time, and effort put into developing the virtual WSP program is amazing. I feel fully prepared to attend a 4-year university and pursue my Bachelor’s of Science and ultimately medical school.”

Princeton University, Class of 2025
In response to feedback from our female veteran alumni who wanted a community where they could interact with other women veterans, we launched our Women Veterans Empowerment Dialogues (WVEDs) series.

WVEDs are a series of informational small group talks given by female or feminine of center veterans. The goal of these talks is to create spaces that are inclusive and empowering for veterans, begin having the difficult conversations that are unique to the female veteran experience, and share what WSP does for the transitioning veteran.

The first WVED launched in November 2020 with WSP alumni Dilia Introini and Mary Swanson talking about how to balance work, school, and family as women veterans pursuing higher education. The series has continued into 2021 with speakers outside of the organization as well as alumni. WVEDs will run once per month during the spring and fall semesters.

During February 2021, our WVED was a panel discussion featuring WSP alumni who are black women veterans in STEM fields. Clockwise from top left: Camilla Hill, Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator; Jessica Nelson, WSP alumna and board member who moderated the panel, and WSP alumnae Alexis Blakes, DeLia Kennedy, and Gabariel Graves-Wake.

**INTRODUCING WOMEN VETERANS EMPOWERMENT DIALOGUES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WVEDs To Date:</th>
<th>February 2021: Black Women Vets in STEM with Jessica Nelson, Alexis Blakes, Gabby Graves-Wake, &amp; DeLia Kennedy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 2020: Balancing Work, Family, and School with Dilia Introini &amp; Mary Swanson</td>
<td>March 2021: Celebrating Women’s Military History with Robin Fortner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2021: Self Care, Boundary/Goal Setting, &amp; Resilience with Lucy Del Gaudio</td>
<td>April 2021: Resiliency &amp; Trauma with Fei Fei Chen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2021: Resiliency &amp; Trauma with Fei Fei Chen</td>
<td>May 2021: Moms Who Serve with Cassie Elder, Kymberly Helwig, &amp; Kasie Valenti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WVEDs speakers have included speakers from outside the organization in addition to alumni. Top: USMC Sgt. Maj. (Ret.) Robin Fortner Bottom: U.S. Army veteran and noted veteran sexual assault victim advocate Lucy Del Gaudio**
WSP is a program that honestly, changed my life. I attended while still on active duty and it solidified my decision not only to go back to school, but to apply to top schools. Now as the President of the University of Chicago SVA chapter, I am walking proof that WSP is making huge waves for vets in higher ed. I want more veterans to know about WSP and what it can give them, and it is important that I give back to an organization that has done so much for me.

--Kaedy Puckett, U.S. Navy, 2017 WSP Syracuse, 2020 WSP Alumni Ambassador, 2020 WSP Mobile Training Team Fellow, currently attending the University of Chicago

ALUMNI AMBASSADORS RELAUNCH

In 2020, we relaunched the Alumni Ambassadors program to make it more robust. WSP alumnus Derek Auguste was brought on board to manage the program.

Alumni Ambassadors help to spread the word about WSP programs to their personal networks in exchange for training in professional communication and recruiting.

They serve in a number of capacities:
- direct recruitment
- introductions to campus administrators
- introductions to military leaders
- participate on alumni panels for information sessions and community college workshops
- assist with social media
- help create marketing materials
- interview for media coverage

ALUMNI PANELS AND SPECIAL SESSIONS

Because summer 2020 boot camps were all virtual due to the pandemic, we were afforded a unique opportunity to get our alumni involved in boot camps that they may have otherwise needed to travel far distances to attend. Our virtual alumni panels on the last day of every course were a huge hit and gave our participants a chance to hear from program alumni about what it is like to succeed in college and beyond.

In addition, we were able to virtually offer education and career-focused panels for our alumni to attend, including a special private discussion and Q&A with General David Petraeus (Ret.).
WSP definitely made me more confident as a student. While I’m still nervous about participating in an academic setting, I know that I can keep up with my own expectations. One of the most important pieces of advice I received during WSP is that imposter syndrome is real. The only person that believes you don’t deserve to be there is yourself. The people around you want you to succeed. Knowing that and having that rattling around in the back of my mind has helped me see myself in the same light as my peers and I’m so grateful to WSP for helping me learn that.

--Brittany Andrade, U.S. Army, 2020 WSP Williams College

DID WSP HAVE AN EFFECT ON HOW CONFIDENT YOU FEEL AS A STUDENT?

As an immigrant, a first-generation college student, and a veteran, I felt academically unprepared compared to the traditional students. WSP gave me the confidence and skills necessary for success and being an effective member of the academic community. I am grateful for the relationships I have developed with my WSP Harvard classmates and fellows and I look forward to staying involved with WSP in the future.

--Oleg Pavliv, U.S. Army, 2020 WSP Harvard
Currently attending Harvard University

“This course has changed my life. I do not mean that statement to be dramatic. I applied to this course because it would help me transition into college. I realize now that I didn’t know what this meant before. One of the best parts of this course for me was the fellows. Their experience in the course and insight into college was an imperative part of this course.”

--Helen Olson, U.S. Marine Corps, 2020 WSP UNC and Notre Dame, Yale University Class of 2025
Though it isn’t the lesson I expected to take away from the course, I came to understand the value of participating in the student veteran community. Before WSP, I wasn’t keen on the idea of leaning on the other student veterans on campus or clinging to my own veteran status. I had preconceived notions about how many of them would feel, believing that they may be overly attached to their veteran identities. I couldn’t have been more wrong. Student veterans come from many different military backgrounds, from special operations to administration and logistics, making them an immensely valuable group of resourceful and experienced individuals.  
--Chris Casper, U.S. Marine Corps, 2020 WSP UC Irvine, Yale University Class of 2025

I came into this week doubting my ability to get into a top university and to fit in due to the rigorous academic standards. During this week, the fellows, university representatives, and fellow students helped convince me I was wrong. The analytical essay I put together gave me confidence that I can successfully fit into a rigorous academic setting, and the help I received enhanced my abilities to write at the college level. The discussions with likeminded veteran college applicants and the sharings from various college reps and those who have been accepted to top universities boosted my confidence in my ability to apply to a top-tier college and actually get in.  
--Joshua Korhorn, U.S. Army, 2020 WSP UChicago

I learned that it is SUPER important to put your ego aside and ask for assistance. There are resources out there all over the place. Use those resources! Go to your professor’s office hours, check out any tutoring options available, and talk to your peers. This is your education so make sure to get the most out of it as you can by taking advantage of all the things around you to help you learn.  
--Elana Merrimarahajara, U.S. Marine Corps, 2020 WSP University of Arizona
THANK YOU TO OUR 2020 SUPPORTERS

We are grateful for your continued generosity!

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The Teagle Foundation
The Warwick Foundation
Tully Family Foundation
Yale University

2020 FINANCIALS

SUPPORT AND REVENUE

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OPERATING EXPENSES

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<td><strong>$1,983,060</strong></td>
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Our entire organization suffered a tragic blow in February with the passing of Arne Sorenson, the CEO of Marriott International. Arne embraced us tightly and warmly. He taught a humanities class every summer and his classes were as inspirational as they were substantive. The same could be said about his impact on his fellow board members. Arne lit up every room he entered. He made everyone around him feel better about themselves, such was his intellect and his humility. We will miss him.
U.S. Marine Corps veteran Jessica Nelson was voted onto our Board of Directors in November 2020. Jessica is the first-ever WSP board member who is also an alumna of the WSP program.

Jessica served six years in the Marine Corps as a geospatial analyst and intelligence chief, serving in multiple regions including South Korea, Japan, and the Middle East. She got involved with WSP in 2017 when she participated in a humanities boot camp at Princeton University, ultimately deepening her relationship with WSP by serving as a humanities fellow. She earned her bachelor of arts in psychology with a concentration in community engagement and social change from Smith College, where she also founded the Student Veteran Organization on campus and served as Community Education Chair.

Jessica is heavily involved in community outreach in Jackson, Mississippi. She currently works with the City of Jackson on grants and special projects in partnership with the W.K Kellogg Foundation and Aspen Institute. Additionally, she is a hometown fellow/mobility innovation team fellow for the Jackson chapter of Lead for America, where she works with national and community partners to improve the occupational outlook and education initiatives to positively impact residents and families. Her passion project is Grid North, a nonprofit she founded to support Mississippi veterans as they transition to careers in the civilian sector.

“I have never felt better than when provided an opportunity to serve my community, and working with WSP in this capacity will allow me to continue to help my fellow veterans as they transition from the battlefield to the classroom. I’m looking forward to continuing to bring people together to support service members during what can be a challenging time in their lives.”

--Jessica Nelson

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