

# Green to Gold

## ROTC programs offer soldiers education, advancement opportunities

By Bob Rosenburgh

They come from Army bases worldwide. They are all veterans who have served their countries and now they are candidates for the Reserve Officer Training Corps. Many of them are members of the U.S. Army Cadet Command's Green to Gold program.

Green to Gold is a career option that gives exceptional enlisted soldiers an opportunity to take their leadership skills to the next level as Army officers. Every year, 400 to 500 Green to Gold cadets attend the National Advanced Leadership camp held at Fort Lewis, Wash.

The Green to Gold program is designed to retain some of the best soldiers in uniform by offering experienced junior enlisted soldiers the opportunity to rapidly advance in rank.

Green to Gold begins when soldiers are honorably released from their enlistment contracts so they may pursue further education, including participating in the ROTC program.

Soldiers may apply for either a scholarship or nonscholarship program. The scholarship program is a two-, three- or four-year plan. The Army pays Green to Gold cadets' tuition. The cadets do not receive a military paycheck, but they do receive a monthly stipend of \$300 to \$500, based on the academic year. Once the cadets are commissioned as second lieutenants, they begin drawing a military salary again.



Two-year nonscholarship cadets eligible to join the Army Reserve or Army National Guard through the Simultaneous Membership Program. (See story next page)

No matter which program the soldiers choose to go for, whether they are selected for the Green to Gold program is based on how well they performed as a soldier.

Cadet Command's personnel seeks out soldiers they think are capable of being scholars, athletes and leaders (SALs). SALs best describes the type of high-quality individuals who are selected for one of the less than 250 national Green to Gold scholarships each year.

Turning a qualified enlisted soldier into an officer through ROTC adds value to the Army's ranks. Officers with prior enlisted service experience have a deeper understanding of the roles between the ranks. These ROTC cadets come back into the Army with the experience, ability and confidence in themselves; they also have a better understanding of both leadership and the ROTC program.

ROTC battalions across the nation benefit from Green to Gold cadets' former enlisted experience, which they share with other cadets, improving everyone's performance.

Soldiers interested in the Green to Gold program should try to learn more about the program by attending a briefing at their installation education center, going online to the Army ROTC Web site at <http://www.armyrotc.com> or speaking with the professor Military Science at a local college or university that hosts an ROTC program.

Applicants are responsible for applying to the university of their choice; the university must accept the candidate before he or she may qualify for Green to Gold.

*(Editor's note: Bob Rosenburgh is the Public Affairs Officer, Western Region Cadet Command, based at Fort Lewis, Wash.)*



### For more information

U.S. Army Cadet Command  
ATTN: ROTC Scholarships (AD)  
Fort Monroe, VA 23651-5238  
Interested soldiers may also call  
(800) USA-ROTC, ext. 484 or  
visit their Web site.

Photo courtesy of Bob Rosenburgh

*A soldier walks across a rope bridge during this year's ROTC National Advanced Leadership Camp at Fort Lewis, Wash. More than 5,000 cadets participate in the annual event, which is a requirement to be commissioned.*

## Soldiers can still serve while attending school, thanks to SMP

Soldiers who want to attend college full-time while still serving their nation, have the opportunity to do so through the Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP).

Through SMP, nonscholarship cadets may enroll in a college ROTC program while simultaneously serving in an Army National Guard or Reserve unit. The program gives them the advantage of learning from both worlds at the same time: They learn leadership skills through the ROTC program and technical skills from their Guard or Reserve duties.

SMP is available to National Guard and Reserve enlisted soldiers, as well as current ROTC juniors and seniors. In addition, the soldiers must be enrolled in advanced ROTC courses and be a nonscholarship cadet or the recipient of the Guaranteed Reserve Forces Duty or Dedicated National Guard two-year scholarship.

SMP is an opportunity for soldiers who are interested in ROTC to work in a local Army Reserve or National Guard unit as an officer.

In addition to the professional development opportunities, cadets participating in SMP also receive a \$300 to \$500 monthly ROTC stipend, sergeant/E-5 pay while attending drill or annual training and – depending on individual cases – either the Montgomery GI Bill or a tuition waiver.

The time a soldier serves in SMP counts toward his or her total years in service. For more information, contact the U.S. Army Cadet Command at (800) USA-ROTC, ext. 484.

*(Editor's note: U.S. Army Cadet Command News Release)*

