



**UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY**  
**ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AND FOUNDATION**

**DISTINGUISHED GRADUATE AWARD**

**Description of the Award**

The Distinguished Graduate Award (DGA) is given annually to a graduate of the United States Naval Academy nominated by a member of the Association and selected by the DGA Selection Panel. The recipient will receive a medal and is expected to attend the DGA Ceremony.

**Eligibility Criteria**

A nominee for DGA must be a living graduate of the United States Naval Academy who has made a distinctive contribution to his or her field or community such as military service, government service, business, education, science, technology, medicine, sports, philanthropic works, humanitarian works, contributions in the arts, or to society at large with a discernible embodiment of the Naval Academy mission. That mission is "To develop midshipmen morally, mentally and physically and to imbue them with the highest ideals of duty, honor and loyalty in order to graduate leaders who are dedicated to a career of naval service and have potential for future development in mind and character to assume the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship and government." As the Naval Academy is and will remain an institution that graduates leaders of character and accountability, the DGA Selection Panel will strive to select graduates who have demonstrated the utmost integrity in their chosen fields. In addition, nominees should be able to demonstrate a lifetime of active support for the Naval Academy through volunteer activities and active engagements with the Naval Academy, Naval Academy Alumni Association, or Naval Academy Foundation in support of the Academy mission.

**Nomination Procedure**

Any Alumni Association member can nominate eligible graduates for the DGA. All nominations must have the endorsement of a Class President or Chapter President. Each nomination for DGA must be routed through the nominee's class president for their information and review. Nominations for the Naval Academy DGA are due each year by November 1st to be considered for the following year's award.

Submissions should be made to [DGA@usna.com](mailto:DGA@usna.com) consistent with the DGA Nomination Guidelines promulgated each year by the Alumni Association.

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Nomination packages will clearly state that the nominee agrees to be nominated for the award and will make every effort to attend the DGA ceremony. Nominees should further understand that their packages will be vetted to take into consideration all publicly available information.

A member of the DGA Selection Panel may not be nominated or receive the award during his or her time serving on the Panel and for a period of two years after terminating service on the DGA Selection Panel.

Military officers, elected officials, political appointees, and Senior Executive Service still serving on active duty, holding public office, or still working for the government shall not be eligible prior to their 45th year from their graduation from the Naval Academy.

The individuals selected for the Distinguished Graduate Award must agree to accept the Award at the medal ceremony whenever possible. Individuals chosen for the Distinguished Graduate Award must be alive when selected and shall make best efforts within their abilities to attend and participate in the Award medal ceremony.

### **Distinguished Graduate Award Selection Panel**

**DGA Selection Panel Mission Statement:** To select living graduates of the United States Naval Academy for the Distinguished Graduate Award.

**DGA Selection Panel Composition:** The DGA Selection Panel will consist of the following voting members:

- 1) Chairman of the Distinguished Graduate Selection Panel will be a member of the Alumni Association not currently serving on the Alumni Association Board of Trustees, and appointed by the Chairman of the Alumni Association Board.
- 2) Superintendent, U.S. Naval Academy.
- 3) Chief Executive Officer, U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association.
- 4) Two (2) members of the U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association Board of Trustees nominated by the Alumni Association Board of Trustees Nominating Committee and approved by the Alumni Association Board of Trustees.
- 5) One (1) member of the U.S. Naval Academy Foundation Board of Directors appointed by the Foundation Board Chair.
- 6) One (1) member of the Naval Academy Foundation Athletic and Scholarship Program Board of Trustees appointed by the Athletic and Scholarship Program Board Chair.
- 7) Two (2) members of the Alumni Association not currently serving on the Alumni Association Board of Trustees and appointed by the Chairman of the Alumni Association Board.

### **DGA Selection Panel Assignments and Term Limits**

DGA Selection Panel members, including the DGA Selection Panel Chair, will be assigned to serve a term no less than two (2) years and no more than three (3) years with no eligibility for reappointment for additional terms to the DGA Selection Panel.

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Although DGA Selection Panel members will be eligible for only one term on the panel, a prior serving DGA Selection Panel member may serve a second three-year term as the DGA Selection Panel Chair.

The Superintendent and the CEO, Alumni Association will serve on the DGA Selection Panel for the duration of their tenure in their respective positions.

The Chairman of the U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association Board of Trustees may serve as a non-voting member of the DGA Selection Panel.

Recipients of the DGA will not be eligible to serve on the DGA Selection Panel until two (2) years after the date of receiving the DGA.

When appointing members to the DGA Selection Panel the Foundation Board leadership, the Athletic and Scholarship Program (A&SP) Board leadership, and the Alumni Association Board of Trustees Chairman will strive to ensure the composition of the DGA Selection Panel reflects the overall diversity of the Alumni Association membership with regard to race, gender, and class year. In addition, they will ensure the DGA Selection Panel is comprised of members who have chosen various career paths, services, and warfare specialties. A current roster of DGA Selection Panel members will be provided to the Alumni Association Board of Trustees' Nominating Committee to assist them in selecting DGA Selection Panel members.

The Chairman of the U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association Board of Trustees will have the authority to appoint substitute members to the DGA Selection Panel in emergent situations where selected DGA Selection Panel members are unable to participate in the scheduled annual panel meeting. Alumni and the Alumni Association Board of Trustees will be informed of the DGA Selection Panel membership periodically, as appropriate via updated postings on the Alumni Association website and other various media as appropriate when any changes occur.

### **Distinguished Graduate Award Selection Panel Process**

Graduates nominated but not selected in the current year are eligible for a total of three consecutive years of consideration with the same nomination package. Nominators must only submit a new nomination cover letter each year the graduate is eligible in that three (3) year period in order for his or her package to again be reviewed by the DGA Selection Panel. Nominations that carry over should have a current year cover letter routed through the chapter or class president and an updated executive summary provided, if desired.

If the DGA Selection Panel considers a nominee for three consecutive years and that nominee is not selected, the nominee may not be considered the next (fourth) year. After a one (1) year non-consideration period, the nomination can be resubmitted for an additional three (3) years. There is no restriction on how many times a graduate can be considered by the panel.

The DGA Selection Panel will use a selection process of ranking nominations to select awardees based on a consensus ranking process.

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There is no specific minimum or maximum number of distinguished graduates that may be selected in any given year, but the norm should be between three and five selectees.

The DGA Selection Panel will announce to the Alumni Association each year the manner that nominations will be received and will promulgate with sufficient time the deadline for submitting nominations for consideration by the DGA Selection Panel.

The DGA Selection Panel shall assess all reasonably and publicly available information with respect to each nominee in its deliberations each year, whether that information is in the nominations package or not.

### **Panel Meetings and Documentation**

The Chairman of the USNA Alumni Association Board of Trustees will promulgate a precept letter to the DGA Selection Panel. The DGA Selection Panel will convene annually to review nominations and select awardees.

The DGA Selection Panel serves autonomously from the Alumni Association, Foundation, and A&SP Boards and will not discuss their deliberations outside the DGA Selection Panel. The DGA Selection Panel shall report DGA selections directly to the Alumni Association Board of Trustees Chair.

The DGA Selection Panel Chair should be prepared to discuss the number of nominations considered and a synopsis of the selected recipients' qualifications with the Alumni Association Board of Trustees Chair as soon as possible after the panel's deliberations.

### **DGA Timeline**

For the 2022 selections, the call for nominations will be emailed to class and chapter presidents and be in Shipmate magazine beginning October 2021. Nominations will be due 31 January 2022 Selection Panel convenes and selects Distinguished Graduates Spring 2022 with the ceremony taking place Fall 2022.

