



West Point
ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 5, 2017

**FORMER PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH TO RECEIVE
2017 WEST POINT SYLVANUS THAYER AWARD**

Medal Award Ceremony Includes Parade by Corps of Cadets at U.S. Military Academy

West Point, NY: The West Point Association of Graduates is pleased to announce that George W. Bush, 43rd President of the United States, will receive the Sylvanus Thayer Award for 2017. The award will be presented on October 19, 2017 during ceremonies hosted by Lt. Gen. Robert L. Caslen, Jr., Class of 1975, Superintendent of the U. S. Military Academy at West Point.

West Point Association of Graduates Board Chairman Lt. Gen. (USA, Ret.) Larry R. Jordan, Class of 1968, said, “The West Point Association of Graduates is honored to present the Thayer Award to President George W. Bush. He is a leader of conviction and resolve who guided our country through the most trying of times following Sept. 11, 2001, and today his service continues in the work of the George W. Bush Institute. Having him forever associated with West Point through the Thayer Award speaks directly to its purpose of recognizing a citizen of the United States, other than a West Point graduate, whose outstanding character, accomplishments, and stature draw wholesome comparison to the qualities for which West Point strives. In fact, the West Point motto—Duty, Honor, Country—is reflected in the basic principles of the George W. Bush Institute’s Military Service Initiative, which are ‘leadership, service, and accountability,’ personal values held and manifested through the public service of President Bush.”

“I thank the West Point Association of Graduates for this high honor,” said President Bush. “As I said in my graduation address to the Bicentennial Class of 2002, ‘West Point graduates leave here marked by the character of this Academy, carrying with them the highest ideals of our nation.’ I am honored to be recognized among those men and women who have dedicated their lives to the values of West Point: Duty, Honor, Country.”

President George W. Bush was born in New Haven, Conn., to Barbara and George H.W. Bush, later the 41st President of the United States, and himself a prior recipient of the Thayer Award (1994). The family later moved to Texas, where Bush grew up in Midland and Houston. He received a bachelor’s degree in history from Yale University in 1968 and a master’s degree in business administration from Harvard Business School in 1975. After college, Bush enlisted in the Texas Air National Guard, was commissioned a second lieutenant, and earned his aviation wings as an F-102 pilot. He was honorably discharged from the Air Force Reserve and settled in Midland, Texas where he started an energy business and married Laura Welch. After working on his father’s successful 1988 Presidential campaign, Bush joined a group of partners that purchased the Texas Rangers baseball franchise. After selling his share of the team in 1994, he successfully ran for governor of Texas, and, in 1998, he became the first governor in Texas history to be elected to two consecutive four-year terms.

In 2000, Bush was elected the 43rd President of the United States and he was re-elected to serve a second term in 2004. During his time in office, Bush accomplished several significant policy initiatives: signing tax relief laws that helped workers keep more of their income, creating comprehensive educational reform, and modernizing Medicare with a prescription drug benefit for seniors. He is most remembered, however, for his leadership after the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, when he responded to the threat to American lives and to freedom by forming the Department of Homeland Security, committing American military forces to fight the Taliban government in Afghanistan, and working to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq, which ultimately laid the foundation for democracy in that country.

After his Presidency, George and Laura Bush founded the George W. Bush Presidential Center in Dallas, Texas. The Center is home to the Bush Presidential Museum and Library, which houses George W. Bush’s

presidential papers. The Center is also home to the George W. Bush Institute, a public policy organization that focuses on economic growth, education reform, global health, human freedom, women's initiatives, and military service. Built on the principles that guided the Bush family in public life, the Institute uses leading research to develop and implement policies that offer practical solutions to pressing problems in the United States and abroad.

President Bush is author of the recently released *Portraits of Courage: A Commander in Chief's Tribute to America's Warriors*, a collection of paintings and stories honoring the sacrifice and courage of America's veterans. He is also the author of bestselling books, *Decision Points* (2010) and *41: A Portrait of My Father* (2014).

About the Sylvanus Thayer Award

The Thayer Award, presented annually since 1958, is the highest honor currently bestowed upon a non-graduate by the West Point Association of Graduates. The selected recipient must be an outstanding citizen of the United States whose service and accomplishments in the national interest exemplify personal devotion to the ideals expressed in the legendary West Point motto: "Duty, Honor, Country." The Award is named for Sylvanus Thayer (Class of 1808), Superintendent of the United States Military Academy at West Point from 1817-1833. Thayer is venerated as the "Father of the Military Academy" for improving West Point's academic standards, instilling military discipline and emphasizing honorable conduct. Thayer's statue stands today in a place of honor on the historic Plain at West Point. Past recipients of the Thayer Award include Robert Mueller, Gary Sinise, Bob Hope, Condoleezza Rice, General Colin Powell, Henry Kissinger, Madeleine Albright, Tom Brokaw, Neil Armstrong, Walter Cronkite, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, and Presidents Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, and Dwight Eisenhower. By tradition, the Thayer Award recipient is honored with a full dress parade by the Corps of Cadets at West Point. Afterwards, the recipient is presented with the Thayer medal, and gives a formal address to the Corps. The honoree also has the opportunity to meet with cadets in the classroom and has his or her legacy of Duty, Honor, Country permanently preserved for future cadets in the Thayer Award Room in Taylor Hall at West Point. For a full list of previous Thayer Award recipients, visit westpointaog.org/ThayerAwardrecipients.

About the West Point Association of Graduates

The West Point Association of Graduates (WPAOG), is among America's oldest educational alumni associations. Founded in 1869, the Association was established "to cherish the memories of [its] Alma Mater, and to promote the social intercourse and fraternal fellowship of its graduates," many of whom had recently fought against each other in the Civil War. WPAOG has evolved into a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation dedicated to furthering the ideals and promoting the welfare of West Point, and to serving and supporting the more than 50,000 living West Point graduates. Its philanthropic pursuits maintain a Margin of Excellence for cadets attending the United States Military Academy. For more information see www.WestPointAOG.org.

About West Point

The U. S. Military Academy at West Point is a four-year, co-educational, federal, liberal arts college located 50 miles north of New York City. It was founded in 1802 as America's first college of engineering and continues today as the world's premier leader-development institution, consistently ranked among top colleges in the country. Its mission remains constant—to educate, train, and inspire the Corps of Cadets so that each graduate is a commissioned leader of character committed to the values of Duty, Honor, Country and prepared for a career of professional excellence and service to the nation as an officer in the U. S. Army. For more information, go to www.westpoint.edu.

###