



**PRINCIPAL GIFT STRATEGIST/SENIOR WRITER**  
**UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AND FOUNDATION**  
**Annapolis, Maryland**  
[United States Naval Academy Alumni Association and Foundation](#)



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

The Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with the United States Naval Academy Alumni Association and Foundation in the search for a Principal Gift Strategist/Senior Writer.

The Principal Gift Strategist/Senior Writer will maximize complex, life-long relationships between principal gift donors and prospective donors and the Naval Academy. The Principal Gifts team assists the Naval Academy Alumni Association and Foundation President and CEO, the Foundation Executive Vice President, and members of the Foundation Board of Directors in engaging principal gift donors and prospective donors as partners, according to their interests and expertise, with the mission and strategic priorities of the Naval Academy and the Naval Academy Alumni Association and Foundation. As a key member of the Principal Gifts team, the Principal Gift Strategist/Senior Writer will provide key analytic, project management, and strategic writing support. The Principal Gift Strategist/Senior Writer will operate independently and as an integral member of a team, while taking on a variety of assigned tasks and projects as a partner in building and advancing donors' relationships with the Alumni Association and Foundation and the Naval Academy.

The Foundation is currently concluding the public phase of its comprehensive campaign, *Called to Serve, Daring to Lead*, which has raised more than \$530 million in support of the Academy and its students. Principal Gifts have played a key role in the success of the campaign and, more importantly, have afforded Naval Academy leadership with the private gift resources to launch and enhance key strategic initiatives and programs, such as the Center for Cyber Security Studies and International Programs. As the Academy looks to the future, it is now more important than ever to build life-long relationships with alumni, parents, and friends who have the passion, dedication, and capacity to make a transformational impact at the Naval Academy. The Principal Gift Strategist/Senior Writer will be part of, and help support, a high-performing team of fundraisers and development professionals who will play a vital role in the success of philanthropic partnerships and leadership.

The United States Naval Academy Alumni Association and the United States Naval Academy Foundation are two independent, not-for-profit corporations sharing a single President and CEO and operating as a fully integrated organization in support of the Naval Academy and its mission. The organization's focus and core competencies are engagement and philanthropy in pursuit of complementary and closely aligned missions. The course set by Alumni Association founders in 1886 rings true today as its mission is to serve and support the United States, the Naval Service, the Naval Academy, and academy alumni by furthering the highest standards at the Naval Academy; seeking out, informing, encouraging, and assisting outstanding, qualified young men and women to pursue careers as officers through the Naval Academy; and initiating and sponsoring activities that will perpetuate the history, traditions, memories, and growth of the Naval Academy and bind alumni together in support of the highest ideals of command, citizenship, and the government.

## REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Principal Gift Strategist/Senior Writer will report to the Vice President, Development, John Rudder.

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The United States Naval Academy Alumni Association and Foundation is committed to treating all with dignity and respect, and affording equal opportunity to everyone to reach their full potential without regard to race, color, religion, gender, disability, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, veteran status, military status, or any other status protected by law.

Its values set it apart from other organizations. It attracts people who are looking for a working environment where initiative and integrity prevail. It expects that certain principles will always be present in its relationships with its employees, members, and suppliers. These principles are

- **Integrity** and honesty;
- **Respect** for all;
- **Service**—customer focus;
- **Excellence** in execution; and
- **Teamwork** and individual responsibility.

## FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT, DEVELOPMENT

*The Principal Gift Strategist/Senior Writer role will be an important next step in the strengthening of our culture of philanthropy at the United States Naval Academy. We are concluding only our second campaign in our history. The very positive results of this campaign have highlighted the depth and quality of our successful alumni and the need to better develop meaningful opportunities for engagement and investment in today's Naval Academy.*

*We are excited to add expertise that can help us unlock the philanthropic potential and intent of our extraordinary alumni, family and friends. The Principal Gift Strategist will become part of a collaborative team of advancement professionals who share a deep commitment to the future of the Academy and the naval service.*

—John Rudder, Vice President, Development

## PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

### Prospect Advancement Support

The Principal Gift Strategist/Senior Writer will

- assist in the execution of prospect/donor strategies for cultivation, proposal development, solicitation, and stewardship, and serve as strategic thought partner for gift officers and team leadership; and
- interact with donors in person, by phone and/or written communication.

### **Principal Gift and Leadership Gift Written Solicitation Support**

The Principal Gift Strategist/Senior Writer will

- draft and edit a range of high-quality, custom materials important to advancing relationships with high-level donors and prospective donors including proposals, briefings for donor meetings, talking points, stewardship reports and materials, presentations, and draft correspondence on behalf of the CEO and President, Executive Vice President, and other Foundation leaders;
- work closely with the Marketing & Communications team to direct the design and format of principal gift proposals and assist in ensuring the consistent use of campaign messaging and branding from a fundraising perspective;
- collaborate on case statements for the President and CEO on Academy-wide priorities; and
- assist with the creation and deployment of Principal Gift communications to prospective donors assigned in key regions.

### **Principal Gift Strategy Development and Tracking**

The Principal Gift Strategist/Senior Writer will

- working closely with the Vice President of Development, help direct Principal Gift workflow to ensure timely completion of assignments;
- prepare and develop the agenda and reports for monthly Principal Gifts team meetings;
- ensure accurate and timely data entry into the Foundation's CRM database for all volunteer leadership activity as well as prospect activity completed by the Vice President of Development, the Executive Vice President, and the President and CEO; and
- work closely with the Advancement Services Director and staff to develop reports that will assist in workflow management of Principal Gifts for the President and CEO as well as key volunteers.

### **Principal Gift Visits and Events**

The Principal Gift Strategist/Senior Writer will

- working closely with the Principal Gift Officer, help provide logistics support for principal gift donor and prospective donor visits through collaboration with colleagues in the Research, Events, Donor Relations & Stewardship, and Marketing & Communications as well as Naval Academy administration;
- assist in the preparation of Principal Gift visit and event schedules and briefing materials for internal and external stakeholders;
- assist with donor correspondence and written content for events as needed;
- support preparation and follow up for events and individual prospect/donor meetings with senior development staff, faculty, and academic leaders;
- maintain the Foundation's master Principal Gifts calendar to maximize Principal Gifts cultivation events;
- assist the Director of Donor Relations & Stewardship in compiling invitation lists for all principal gift campaign events; and
- serve as the primary staff member working with the Marketing & Communications team on content and dissemination for all pre- and post-event guest electronic communications.

## KEY COLLEAGUES

### **John Rudder '78**

#### **Vice President, Development**

John Rudder is a 1978 graduate of the United States Naval Academy and served five years in the Navy's nuclear submarine program. He spent the next 30 years in corporate America in a variety of sales and executive roles. His last 15 years were with two early stage companies where he ran the sales organizations.

In Dec 2011, Rudder joined the United States Naval Academy Foundation as Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations. In 2014, he picked up the additional responsibilities of managing the Major Gifts and Planned Giving teams. For the past two years, he has also served as the Major Gifts Officer for northern California. Previously, Rudder was President of his Naval Academy class and served as a volunteer for five years supporting corporate fundraising before joining the Foundation. John is married and lives in Annapolis and has two adult daughters.

### **William J. O'Connor, Ph.D.**

#### **Executive Vice President**

Dr. William J. O'Connor joined the United States Naval Academy Foundation as Executive Vice President in April 2012. Most recently, O'Connor served for nine years as Vice President for Institutional Advancement at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York. Prior to his time at St. John Fisher, O'Connor was Executive Director at Community Counseling Service (CCS), a well-regarded international fundraising firm. There he implemented and managed comprehensive campaigns for several major educational and healthcare institutions. Earlier positions included teaching at the St. John's Senior Secondary School in Uganda, East Africa and serving as a Mombusho English Fellow in Kyoto, Japan. O'Connor was awarded the St. John's University International Medal in 2001 for his humanitarian services in Uganda and Japan.

O'Connor graduated with a B.A. in English Literature from St. John's University in Jamaica, New York, where he was a member of the Skull and Circle Honor Society and the recipient of a four-year baseball scholarship. He received an M.A. in English Literature, with a concentration in Medieval and Renaissance literature, from St. John's three years later, and earned his Ph.D. in educational leadership and policy from the University at Buffalo, State University of New York in 2007. O'Connor completed Harvard University's Institute for Educational Management certificate program in 2010. O'Connor and his wife Monica live in the Annapolis area with their four sons and one daughter.

### **Byron Marchant '78**

#### **President and CEO**

Byron Marchant is the President and CEO of the U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association and Foundation. Prior to this position, Marchant served as the Executive Vice President, General Counsel and Chief Administrative Officer for Black Entertainment Television in Washington, DC. He was a partner with the law firm Patton Boggs, LLP, and previously served as Senior Vice President and General Counsel for Annapolis-based Telecommunications Systems Inc. He also served as Senior Legal Advisor to Federal Communications Commissioner Andrew Barrett and was an attorney with Sidley Austin.

Marchant graduated with merit from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1978 earning a Bachelor of Science in American Political Systems and earned his J.D. from the University of Virginia Law School. He was in the submarine service before transferring to the Naval Reserve in 1984, where he fulfilled numerous assignments in the Naval Reserve Intelligence program and attained the rank of Commander in the U.S. Naval Reserves.

Marchant is a life member of the U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association and a member of the New Jersey Bar, the U.S. Supreme Court Bar, the Federal Communications Bar Association and the American Bar Association. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the National Sailing Hall of Fame and the U.S. Naval Academy Foundation. He is a member of the Board of Trustees for the U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association. Marchant served two terms on the Board of Visitors at George Mason University and also has served on the Advisory Committee to the Sallie Mae Foundation, The American Red Cross of the Washington Metropolitan area, the University of Virginia Alumni Association Board of Managers, and the UVA Campaign Executive Committee. Marchant was an adjunct professor at the University of Virginia Law School.

### **PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

The United States Naval Academy Alumni Association and Foundation seeks a Principal Gift Strategist/Senior Writer with

- a sincere and enthusiastic belief in the mission of the U.S. Naval Academy;
- strong analytical and critical thinking skills and an ability to think strategically about donor engagement at the highest level;
- exceptional interpersonal skills and an ability to manage sensitive and confidential information;
- excellent verbal, written, and interpersonal communication skills;
- an ability to write clear, concise, and compelling content in both long and short forms;
- a high degree of organization and attention to detail;
- an ability to prioritize and manage multiple, varied, and on-going projects simultaneously;
- an ability to conduct research and analysis through databases/online information systems;
- proficiency in the Microsoft Office Suite (Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint) and fundraising database/software, preferably Blackbaud's CRM database;
- proficiency in financial analysis; and
- professional integrity, intellectual curiosity, and an ability to collaborate across teams.

A bachelor's degree is required for this position as is at least five years of leadership fundraising or advancement services experience.

### **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

The United States Naval Academy Alumni Association and Foundation offers a competitive salary commensurate with experience. The Alumni Association and Foundation offers a generous benefits plan which includes medical, dental, vision, an FSA, an HSA, a fully-vested 403(b) retirement plan with employer matching, 22 days of accrued paid time off (PTO) per fiscal year, 13 paid holidays per calendar year, group life insurance, short-term and long-term disability, identity theft protection, and annual opportunities for professional development.

### **LOCATION**

This position is based in historic Annapolis, Maryland near the U.S. Naval Academy. In 2022, the staff of the Alumni Association and Foundation will move into new modern offices in a to-be-constructed *Alumni Center*, which is being built on the banks of College Creek overlooking the Naval Academy and downtown Annapolis.

## **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. The cover letter should be responsive to the mission of the United States Naval Academy Alumni Association and Foundation.

Consistent with the United States Naval Academy's commitment to careers of naval service and the highest responsibilities of command, citizenship, and government, the Alumni Association and Foundation encourage applications from US Naval Academy Graduates and other veterans meeting qualifications for the position, especially those with a record of consistent volunteer engagement with USNA Alumni Association or Foundation or in support of USNA.

Review of applications will begin immediately and will continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

*To apply for this position, visit:*

[Principal Gift Strategist/Senior Writer, United States Naval Academy Alumni Association and Foundation.](#)

*To nominate a candidate, please contact Ron Schiller:*

[ronschiller@aspenleadershipgoup.com](mailto:ronschiller@aspenleadershipgoup.com).

*All inquiries will be held in confidence.*