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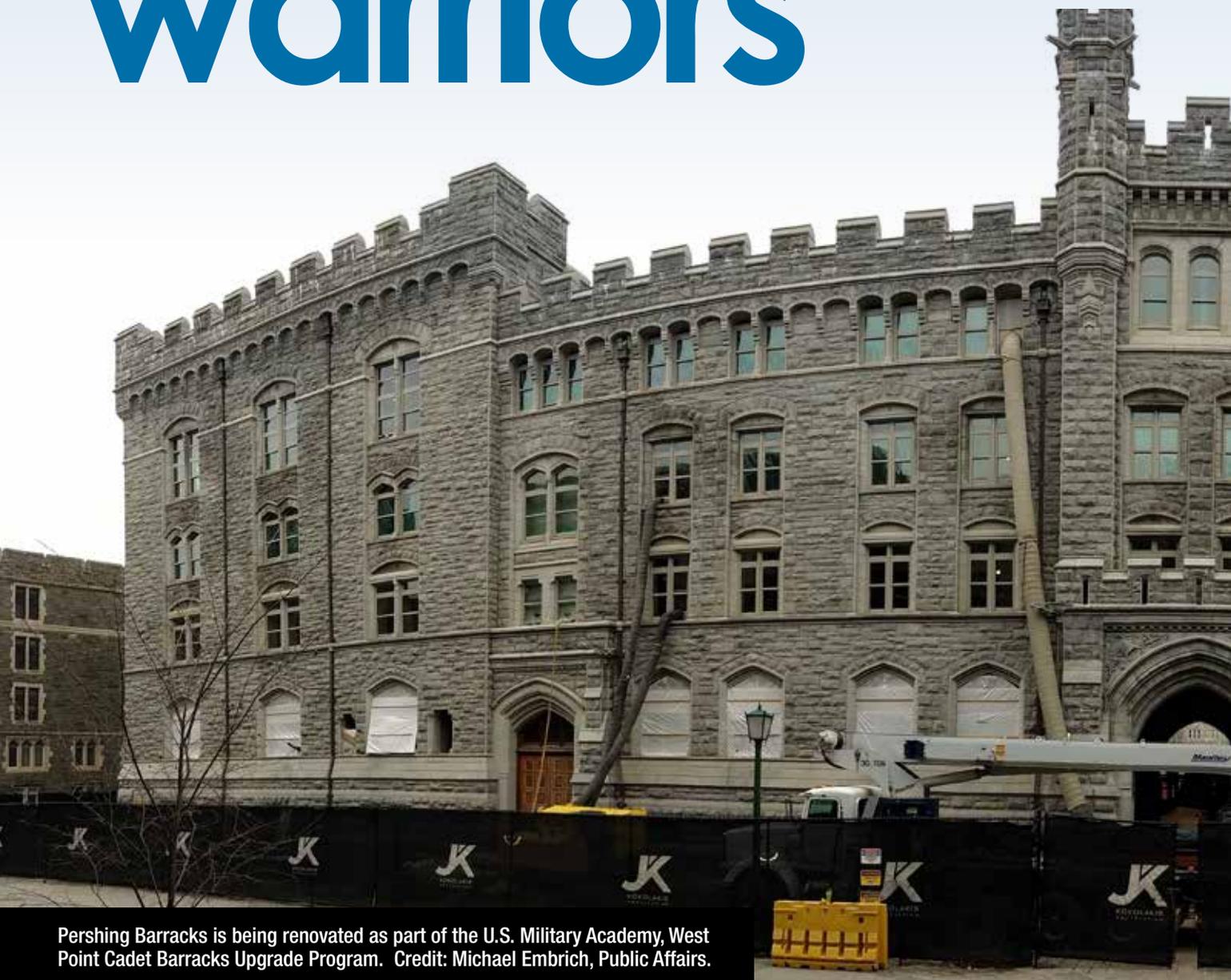
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How the Army is updating its barracks to appeal to recruits

Modern day warriors

How the Army is updating its barracks to appeal to recruits

By JoAnne Castagna, Ed.D.



Pershing Barracks is being renovated as part of the U.S. Military Academy, West Point Cadet Barracks Upgrade Program. Credit: Michael Embrich, Public Affairs.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District is renovating Pershing Barracks as part of the U.S. Military Academy, West Point Cadet Barracks Upgrade Program. The program is designed to modernize existing barracks to continue to attract high caliber candidates to the academy.

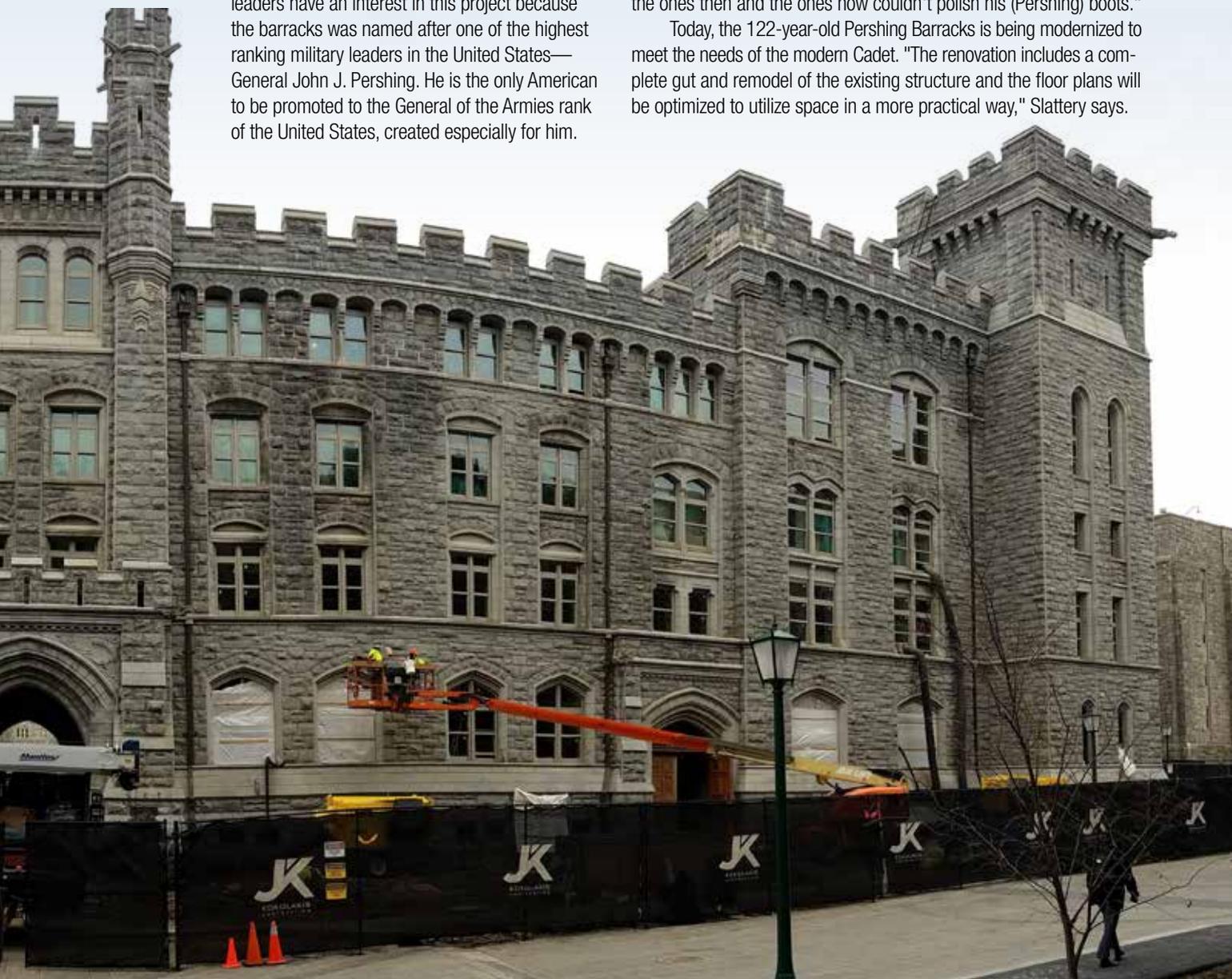
During ongoing renovations to the Pershing Barracks, two 3-star general officers requested tours of the building and observed extensive upgrades. "This kind of interest in a project from senior leaders demonstrates its importance," says Caitlin Slattery, project manager, New York District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, who led the tours.

It's not a surprise that distinguished military leaders have an interest in this project because the barracks was named after one of the highest ranking military leaders in the United States—General John J. Pershing. He is the only American to be promoted to the General of the Armies rank of the United States, created especially for him.

Pershing received the honor because of his expertise in military tactics and his service to his country that included commanding conflicts at home and abroad. He also was a West Point graduate—Class of 1886—who later became an instructor at the academy.

It is because of this that the academy named a barracks after him. Pershing had a reputation as a strict and rigid instructor, and leader. A soldier who was once under his command said, "As a soldier, the ones then and the ones now couldn't polish his (Pershing) boots."

Today, the 122-year-old Pershing Barracks is being modernized to meet the needs of the modern Cadet. "The renovation includes a complete gut and remodel of the existing structure and the floor plans will be optimized to utilize space in a more practical way," Slattery says.



A new look

When completed, the four story barracks will have 135 rooms that will sleep 270 Cadets who will have access to two laundry rooms. To assist the Cadets with their academics, each Cadet company will have Collaboration Rooms that will allow them to meet in large numbers to work on group projects or participate in team building activities.

Cadets will also have such amenities as water bottle filling stations in the hallways and work stations equipped with cable connectors and power supply between computers and devices—Universal Serial Bus (USB) ports.

In addition, the building will be outfitted with completely new mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems.

The barracks also will get something that it didn't have before – air conditioning. Many of these new and upgraded features will be energy-efficient making the barracks Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver Certifiable.

The inside of the structure is being modernized, but the exterior's military gothic revival architecture is being maintained in order to blend in with the rest of the historic 200-year old campus.



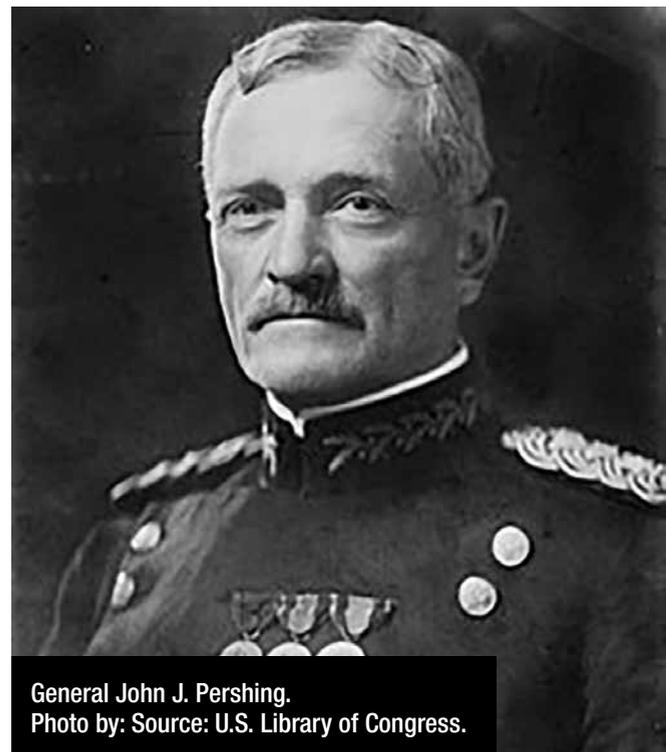
Superintendent of USMA, LTG Caslen (center) requested a tour of the Pershing Barracks renovation. Credit: USACE.

“The renovation includes a complete gut and remodel of the existing structure and the floor plans will be optimized to utilize space in a more practical way.”

– Caitlin Slattery, Project Manager, New York District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



Chief of Engineers, LTG Semonite (center) requested a tour of the Pershing Barracks renovation to see the construction and to talk with USACE team members involved in the Cadet Barracks Upgrade Program. Standing next to Semonite is Caitlin Slattery, project manager, New York District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Credit: USACE.



General John J. Pershing.
Photo by: Source: U.S. Library of Congress.

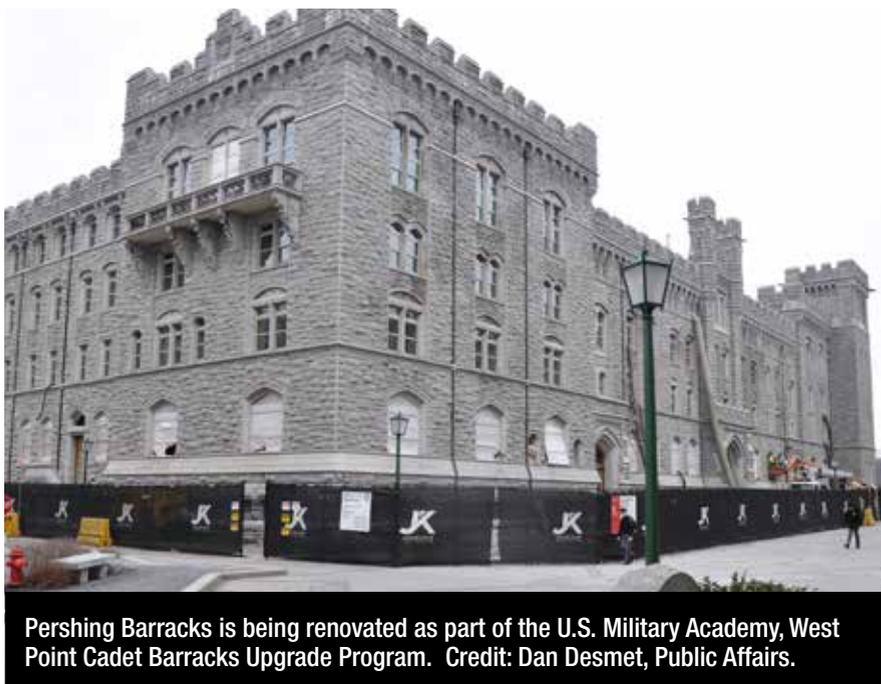


The renovation of Pershing Barracks includes a complete gut and remodel of the existing structure and the floor plans are being optimized to utilize space in a more practical way. Credit: USACE.



The renovation of Pershing Barracks includes a complete gut and remodel of the existing structure and the floor plans are being optimized to utilize space in a more practical way. Credit: Dan Desmet, Public Affairs.

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Pershing Barracks is being renovated as part of the U.S. Military Academy, West Point Cadet Barracks Upgrade Program. Credit: Dan Desmet, Public Affairs.

To maintain the building's original granite exterior, the granite stones are being repointed.

"Repointing is when the joints of brick or stonework are repaired by filling in with grout or mortar," Slattery says. "The primary purpose of this is to prevent water from infiltrating into the building."

In addition, the building's large parapet stones—that sit along the perimeter of the roof—are also being removed to replace the flashing. "Flashing is typically a strip of metal which is used to prevent water from penetrating the junction of a building's roof with the surrounding areas," Slattery says.

The building's well known historic tower clock is also being refurbished. "The renovation will provide the Cadets a more comfortable and modern space for daily life, which will allow them to spend more time focusing on their course work and other obligations," Slattery says.

The barracks is expected to be available to the Cadets this fall.

Pershing was dedicated to his country and to educating future military leaders. The U.S. Military Academy shares this dedication and is demonstrating this with the modernization of the building that bears his name. **FC**

Dr. JoAnne Castagna is a senior contributor for Federal Construction and Commercial Construction & Renovation, and a Public Affairs Specialist and writer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District. She can be reached at joanne.castagna@usace.army.mil