

The West Point Class of 1970 is pleased to join with the West Point Society of Annapolis in nominating **William Harvey Roedy Jr** (Cullum Number 29459) as a Distinguished Graduate of the United States Military Academy. Known to everyone around the World as 'Bill Roedy', he is the son of COL (Ret) William Harvey Roedy, Class of 1940, (Cullum Number 11846) a World War II (including a Coast Artillery commander in Hawaii during the Pearl Harbor attack) and a Korean War veteran.

In a career of over 45 years that encompasses distinguished military service along with extraordinary achievements in global business and global health, Bill has maintained his easygoing nature with steadfast leadership, integrity and vision.

Bill Roedy entered West Point on July 1, 1966 with the Class of 1970. In multiple careers, he has clearly distinguished himself in everything he has pursued since graduation, always personifying the ideals of Duty, Honor, Country throughout our world. His public service has been a dominant theme and has been widely recognized in both the private and public sector.

## **Bill Roedy – The Warrior**

Upon graduation Bill was commissioned in the Air Defense Artillery, and immediately volunteered for duty in Vietnam. After completing Airborne and Ranger Schools and the ADA Officer Basic Course he was assigned to I corps near the DMZ. He served with 1/44 Artillery starting with Operation Lam Son 719 disrupting the Ho Chi Minh Trail in early 1971, and ending as a General's Aide during the Easter Offensive in 1972, earning the Bronze Star and Air Medal awards, plus the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry (with Silver Star). From 1972 to 1974 he served on a nuclear missile base with the 13<sup>th</sup> Air Defense Group. He culminated his Army service as a Cold Warrior with the 559<sup>th</sup> Artillery Detachment in northern Italy for four years (1974-1977) where he commanded three NATO Nuclear Missile Bases, with a security clearance of Top Secret, Cosmic, Atomic and Cryptographic, earning the Meritorious Service Medal. After a career entirely in the field as a commander, Bill resigned from the Army in 1977 to attend Harvard Business School, where his father had graduated from the Kennedy School of Government some thirty years earlier.

## **Bill Roedy – The International Business Visionary**

Upon graduation from Harvard in 1979 with a Master's Degree in Business Administration, Bill began his journey to incredible international business success reaching more than two billion people in more than 200 countries.

### **Home Box Office (1979 to 1989)**

Bill joined HBO in 1979 when it was a subscription channel broadcasting only 9 hours per day. It was the early days of the Cable TV industry and Bill was part of the early effort driving this new television revolution.

To get to know the business from the ground up, Bill began his HBO career as an installer, placing and repairing cable in a dozen apartments in NYC every day.

As a manager of HBO's National Accounts he negotiated deals with the largest cable operators throughout the country to launch HBO on their systems. These deals were responsible for massive distribution, creating access and scale. Bill was extraordinarily successful in rolling out HBO across America. He always kept his military connection, including introducing the highly regarded HBO program 'Letters Home', telling the story of fellow Vietnam Veteran's experiences through their personal letters. For his role in the emerging cable business, Bill was later honored as a Pioneer in the Cable Industry.

### **MTV Europe (1989 to 2004)**

In 1989 after helping to drive the United States cable industry, Bill moved to London to lead MTV Europe. Starting with a single channel, operating only in Holland and Greece he rapidly expanded the business throughout Europe. The cable industry in Europe was in its infancy and MTV and Nickelodeon were forced to pioneer a variety of content delivery methods including satellite, cable and terrestrial transmission. Bill's first challenge was to expand the distribution of the channels to cover all of Europe. He adapted the mantra of 'aggressive, creative, relentless distribution'. This, he painstakingly accomplished, working through the political, cultural and regulatory challenges of each country.

He successfully dealt with numerous complexities including finding satellite capacity to developing compelling programming. Bill's achievements at MTV and Nickelodeon were built around his successful localization model that empowered each operation to embrace both commercial and artistic autonomy, while finding the right balance between local and international content. His pioneering strategy of respecting and reflecting audience diversity through local language, music, fashion and children's programming led to the huge success of MTV Networks International. He developed a special connection to young people worldwide regardless of culture, language or geography.

## **MTV Networks International (1994 to 2011)**

As a result of his remarkable success as the leader of MTV Networks Europe, Bill became Chairman and CEO of MTVNI and took charge of launching 20 different brands (including Nickelodeon, Paramount, Comedy Central as well as MTV), expanding the reach to Asia-Pacific, Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. The localization strategy proved to be the key success factor in countries as politically and culturally diverse as China, Russia, Saudi Arabia and India, thus opening up these new markets to new and informative programming for the first time ever. He took an immensely successful American business model, gave it multiple dialects and expanded it throughout the world.

Under Bill's leadership MTV Networks International (MTVNI) built a global operation of over 200 channels in over 200 countries, broadcast in over 30 languages, and reaching a potential audience of over two billion people. Bill was also responsible for the development and operation of the Nickelodeon channel and consumer products for kids and the Comedy Channel for adults, making MTVNI the largest media network in the world and launching the most channels in the history of television. During this relentless expansion, Bill employed a keen sense of diplomacy to enter each country, meeting over thirty heads of state from Nelson Mandela to Mikhail Gorbachev and also numerous Nobel Peace Prize Winners from Shimon Perez to Jimmy Carter. Among his many awards, he also received the International Emmy Founders Award in 2004.

## **Bill Roedy – The Global Health Ambassador**

Bill understood early on that MTVNI had a global reach that could be a positive force for good in the world. His channels engaged in numerous disaster relief initiatives, including the 2005 tsunami, the Gujarat earthquake of 2001, the Haiti earthquake of 2010 (raising 80 Million USD to build a new hospital). His campaigns ranged from 'no-smoking' to 'protect the environment' to 'nutrition and education for kids'. In 1996 he launched 'Rock The Vote' initiatives in Russia, Taiwan and Palestine, who were conducting first time elections ever.

Under Bill's leadership MTVNI became the corporate world leader in fighting HIV/AIDS. Through MTVNI's *Staying Alive* campaign Bill led the brand's global efforts to promote HIV/AIDS education, prevention and anti-stigma. The *Staying Alive* campaign has produced award-winning HIV/AIDS related documentaries, concerts, town halls and public service announcements, all of which were made available to Broadcasters rights free and at no cost. Bill continues to serve as the Chairman of the *Staying Alive Foundation* that fights the epidemic at the grass roots level to complement the global TV channel efforts.

In 1998 Bill was named the first ever Ambassador for UNAIDS (the joint United Nations program on HIV/AIDS). During this time, the Executive Director of UNAIDS made the memorable statement that "MTV can save more lives than doctors". He has addressed the UN General Assembly on several occasions regarding the pandemic, and he was the General Assembly keynote speaker, along with Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, at the 2010 Model UN.

Bill also served as the founding Member and Chair of the Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS from 1999-2002, greatly increasing the commitment of the business community around the world to fight the pandemic, later adding TB and Malaria. For this work he was awarded the 'Business Leadership Award' as Chairman of the Global Business Coalition, an honor bestowed by US president Bill Clinton.

In April 2005, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan appointed Bill as founding Chair of the Global Media AIDS Initiative (GMAI) Leadership Committee. The GMAI was launched in 2004 with 22 participants. Under Bill's leadership it grew to include 140 companies from 70 countries. For his work with the UN, Bill in 2009 received the 'Global Citizen Award' presented by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

Bill joined the board of the widely respected American Foundation for AIDS Research (amfAR) supporting the Countdown to a Cure by 2020. Bill received the 'Award of Courage' in 2007, presented to him by Beyoncé.

He also received the 'Health and Human Rights Leadership Award' from Doctors of the World in 2008.

In November 2010 he was appointed as the first Envoy/Ambassador for the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations (GAVI) by Mary Robinson, the GAVI Chair and the former President of Ireland. He has since been appointed to the Board. This initiative started by Bill and Melinda Gates has vaccinated over 400 million children saving over 10 million lives. Bill has helped with private sector partnerships and fundraising, leading to a record breaking replenishment of 7.5 Billion USD, in 2015.

Bill has also been selected to serve on several other Boards, including:

- National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences
- Barbara Bush's Global Health Corps
- The Hawn Foundation (Goldie Hawn)
- American School in London, where he launched the Diversity and Cultural Competence Initiative
- Westminster College
- Berlin School of Creative Leadership
- TowerBrook Capital Partners (Private Equity), based in London and N.Y.
- ClearVue Partners (Private Equity), based in Shanghai
- Lionsgate International
- And numerous high tech start-ups

He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations as well as the United States Middle East Project (USMEP), promoting peace, policy and stability in the Middle East. He supports Seeds of Peace, a peacebuilding and leadership development organization, and is a Churchill Fellow. He is also the author of 'What Makes Business Rock', that became a CNBC Best Book of Summer 2011 and is currently writing a second book.

**Bill Roedy is THE world leading humanitarian global health ambassador and global citizen.**

## **Bill Roedy – The Distinguished Graduate**

Other than in wartime, perhaps no other graduate has had a greater positive impact on the world than Bill Roedy. His global work continues to this day. He has been recognized by world leaders, universities (six commencement addresses and two honorary Doctorate degrees) and countless television and press profiles. On a November weekend in 2014, Bill was invited to speak at a dinner in Berlin with President Mikhail Gorbachev, celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Bill was actually in East Berlin on November 9<sup>th</sup>, 1989 when the Berlin Wall came down. In the early months of 1989 Bill engineered a strategy to broadcast MTV 'in the clear' behind the Iron Curtain, immediately preceding the political change in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Bill Roedy's many accomplishments clearly reflect all that he learned at West Point and has lived throughout his life of service to our country and the world.

Foremost in all his life experiences, the mission of West Point remains at the core of his service. He consistently employs the lessons of West Point including the design of his global business, modeled after a military organization, as well as using West Point leadership lessons of 'first on the battlefield, last to leave'. Last year he delivered the keynote address at the Vietnam Memorial, commemorating fallen comrades including the class of 1970, which is the bookend class of Vietnam casualties. His life continues to be guided by the West Point motto, 'Duty, Honor, Country' along with his class motto 'Serve with Integrity'.

Finally, Bill is a dedicated family man, married to his wife Alexandra and father to their four children.

William Harvey Roedy Jr is a perfect candidate for selection as a Distinguished Graduate, and is hereby nominated as such.

Sincerely,

Bill Taylor '70  
Class of 1970 Distinguished Graduate Committee  
West Point Society of Annapolis Director