



Oregon Youth Challenge Program

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# OREGON NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH CHALLENGE

## 2013

**OUR MISSION:** Is to provide opportunities for personal growth, self-improvement and academic achievement among Oregon high school drop outs, youth no longer attending and those failing in school, through a highly structured non-traditional environment; integrating training, mentoring and diverse educational activities.



Accredited  
through  
2014

## Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program

- Located in Bend, the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program (OYCP) is an early intervention program serving 16 to 18 year old male and female high school dropouts.
- Funding for the program is 75% federal and 25% state.
- OYCP provides opportunities for cadets to earn a high school diploma, a GED or 8 Oregon certified high school credits and then re-enroll with their hometown high school.
- The goal is to get youth back on track with their education and take potential tax burdens and change them into taxpayers
- OYCP is a fully accredited High School with the Oregon Department Of Education
- Bend / La Pine is OYCP's host school district, approves the curriculum annually
- High school curriculum is delivered by certified teachers as approved by the Oregon Department of Education.
- Youth Challenge is a voluntary program for all participants
- OYCP is Oregon's only public quasi-military based school
- OYCP is a statewide public alternative high school serving all 36 counties
- The program consists of a 22 week residential school phase followed by a 12 month post residential mentoring phase
- OYCP conducts two classes per year; serving 312 youth and graduates a minimum of 240 cadets each year
- Each cadet must have placement in 1 of 4 areas upon graduation: return to high school, college, enter the work force or join the military
- Each cadet participates in service to community activities, with a minimum of 80 hours per cadet over 22 weeks
- Scholarship opportunities are available to graduating cadets
- OYCP provides outreach to all school districts in Oregon to inform them about this alternative education opportunity.

## PHILOSOPHY / GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Philosophy:** We do not change kids; we create opportunities for kids to change.
- **Standards:** A no-nonsense approach with high standards, structure, discipline and non-negotiable commitment to follow through. Our way...our terms.
- **Self-Esteem:** We believe kids learn and gain confidence through self-discovery, building self-esteem and through re-enforcement that they can achieve their potential.
- **Healthy and Physically Challenging:** Classroom performance and personal growth are fostered by good physical conditioning, routine sound eating habits and mental alertness.
- **Life Skills:** Kids need to understand their strengths and weaknesses and to learn to responsibly engage and problem solve day to day challenges they encounter.
- **Safe Environment:** Kids excel in a safe environment without distractions. This provides opportunity for them to focus on personal growth.
- **Staff / Mentor Role Models:** Provide adult role models that demonstrate responsible adult behaviors, transfer basic guiding morals and values associated with becoming good stewards and Oregon citizens.
- **Service Learning:** As an extension of the classroom through integrated learning, youth learn service to community and others as a value in citizenship.

## **PROGRAM VISION:**

The Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge vision is to be one of the State's leaders and premier youth programs serving high school drop outs and those who are not likely to succeed in the traditional high school system, while creating economic value, long term cost avoidance, civic contribution and future responsible tax paying citizens of Oregon.

## **PROGRAM MISSION:**

The program mission is to provide opportunities for personal growth, self-improvement and academic achievement among Oregon high school drop outs, teens no longer attending and those failing in school, through a highly structured non-traditional environment; integrating training, mentoring and diverse educational activities.

The primary purpose of the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program is to provide a non-traditional education through a quasi-military accredited alternative school. The target population is Oregon High School dropouts, students failing in school as defined by the Oregon GPA system and those students no longer attending school.

## **EDUCATIONAL MODEL (Diploma, GED, Credit Recovery):**

The classroom educational service model shall parallel the Oregon Department of Education requirements including the required Oregon Assessment of Knowledge Skills. No cadet shall be eligible for the Oregon High School Diploma without completing the required 24 alternative high school credits as approved by the Bend-LaPine School District. All diplomas that are recommended for certification must receive the authorization and signature of the Bend-LaPine Superintendent of Schools. The GED shall be issued only to those cadets who pass all five core curriculum areas on the GED test independently administered by Central Oregon Community College. Sixteen year old cadets may only take the GED after meeting a specific criteria and having received parent approval.

To receive 8 high school credits, a cadet must meet or exceed all pre-approved course work and test requirements with a passing grade of 80% or higher and graduate from the residential phase. Oregon's primary educational focus will be academic development / credit recovery, GED and the Oregon High School Diploma.

**Residential Phase** The educational purpose shall include the opportunities to earn a high school diploma, GED or 8 Oregon certified high school credits and then re-enroll with the goal to graduate from their high school.

**Post Residential / Mentoring Phase** – The purpose of the 12 month post residential phase is for the mentor to assist the cadet reintegrate into their community and begin practicing the guiding principles, values and placement(s) developed while at the Oregon Youth Challenge residential school.

## YOUTH CHALLENGE 8 CORE COMPONENTS

1. **Academic Excellence:** In this component the primary focus is the High School Diploma, GED, 8 High School Credits and cadet academic improvement.
2. **Physical Fitness:** This component focuses on cadet physical fitness, conditioning and personal health.
3. **Leadership/Followership:** Opportunities and experiences are provided to cadets under the military structure of the program that will prepare them to take on active leadership roles in the community. Cadets will function in rotating leadership positions and participate in extensive team building exercises. They also learn the importance of being a good follower.
4. **Job Skills:** Job skill information and training is not intended to qualify cadets for any specific field of work. Rather, the program provides instruction in basic soft and technical skills, an orientation to successful work attitudes and workplace behaviors, and a composite of what it takes to be a quality and a productive employee.
5. **Life Coping Skills:** Through classroom instruction, using large and small group instructional techniques, cadets learn how to set goals and develop their personal life plans, gain practical experience with techniques for successful personal financial/banking/checking accounts/paying bills/credit issues and responsible financial management; learn to manage difficult life events and learn alternative techniques for conflict resolution, anger management, problem solving, setting goals and objectives.
6. **Service to Community:** The goal is that each cadet will complete 80 hours of service in the community. The intent is that cadets learn to contribute to their communities in a meaningful way and continue to give back to their communities once they return home.
7. **Responsible Citizenship:** This training encompasses a broad range of subjects designed to assist the cadet in living as a responsible involved citizen. Issues addressed include cultural awareness, promoting justice, respecting differences, environmental responsibility, signing up for the selective service, registering to vote, understanding our constitution, election / voting process, diversity, and effective use of community resources.
8. **Health & Hygiene:** This component is classroom instruction and guest speakers to include a broad range of subjects including parenting, substance abuse, sexual responsibility and sexually transmitted diseases and effects of tobacco.

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

The primary focus and goal of the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program is **to improve education, life skills and placement potential after the residential phase for participating cadets**. This is accomplished by providing military-based training, classroom instruction and mandatory CORE areas of training. The educational CORE areas include assisting cadets in obtaining a high school diploma or equivalent, developing leadership qualities, promoting service learning and community service, developing life-coping skills and job skills, while improving physical fitness, health and hygiene.

As a commitment to the National Guard Bureau / State partnership, the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program will focus on the following service goals during each class:

1. Serve a minimum of 312 cadets per year and 624 cadets per biennium that have previously been unsuccessful, dropped out or are not attending a required Oregon traditional high school.
2. Successfully graduate a minimum of 120 cadets per class, 240 cadets per year, and 480 per biennium.
3. 100% of all attending cadets shall at a minimum, earn one of the following; a High School diploma, Oregon GED or 8 high school credits and return to high school after graduation from the residential phase.
4. 100% of attending cadets will have a qualified trained adult mentor prior to graduation from the residential component.
5. 10% of all attending cadets will enlist in the United States Armed Forces during the 17-month program.
6. 100% of the cadet residential graduates will have a placement that represents return to school, military, secondary education, vocational placement, Job Corps or employment at the time of graduation from the residential component.
7. 70% (7/10) of all cadets completing the 17 month program shall be placed and accounted for at the end of the 12 month mentoring phase.
8. Actual per day, per cadet costs for the 24/7 residential school operation to the State of Oregon shall be the same or less than the current per student costs for the state to fund the mainstream school system 6-7 hour per day, 5 day public high school student costs.
9. 100% of the Oregon Youth Challenge graduates will increase academic performance in math, reading and language during the 22-week intensive school program.
10. Less than 5% of the Youth Challenge graduates will be arrested/convicted on or before completion of the 17 month program as validated through mentor reports.

# OYC MENTOR OF THE YEAR

## Arthur E Fox

Mentoring, A Fantastic Experience By: Arthur E. Fox, (Cory Countryman 2003-1)

Facing retirement and the absence of young children, which had been my life as an elementary school counselor, I was thinking, okay, what's next? At that same time a phone call came from a friend asking me if I would consider being a mentor for his son. He shared with me the difficulties from family and personal issues, school problems, to peers and drugs. Simply put, a young man lost with little direction in his life. His father had tried various things, but with minimal results. It was at this time that he learned about OYCP and discussed it with his son. Once they had agreement between the two of them, they needed a mentor. Well I must say, that first face to face encounter didn't leave me with much hope. But, I reflected on my lifelong philosophy when dealing with kids and what I said to them. There is no bad kid, just kids like adults who make bad choices. So with this in mind I said yes and off I went on a roller coaster ride.

My first encounter with OYCP was the reference sheets and the eventual mentor training Saturday. This was an interesting session as I met many other mentors and interacted with them during the course of the training. The small group activities were engaging and caused you to think about yourself and how you will approach the mentoring. Again, my background and training seemed tailored for this experience and I left looking forward to my trip to Bend and meeting my mentee once again.

Arriving in Bend and going out to the OYCP compound was an eye opener. It took me back to my military days and I have fond memories of those four years. Once inside there was a brief meeting and then it was off to tour the area. Seeing the classrooms along with their class work, the bunk area, chow hall and how all the Cadets were so well mannered made me think, this is a good program. Couple this with my mentee's later ongoing commentary about the program made one aware of the work ahead to keep this new foundation growing upward. One of the funniest things that happened this day was at lunch time. The Cadets don't get an overabundance of food, so when I said, would you like to have this, there was no doubt, yes Sir! The visitation concluded this day with goal writing with the Cadet. As we did this I had to think, okay, how am I going to support him in each of these goals. So, with a copy of his goals in hand I said good-bye and headed home thinking of my responsibilities.

As I said earlier, there are no bad kids and one must also be willing to accept unconditionally your mentee. I believe this is the same belief we have as parents, we love our children unconditionally, not only when they do the right things, but also when they mess up. So with this belief I looked forward to my mentee's graduation and coming home. I continued to write him letters while he was in OYCP and received some from him. Then the big day came, GRADUATION in June. My wife and I made the trip over and watched as he graduated from High School with honors and it made us both so proud. We took our camera along and captured some of this wonderful occasion for him. He was so excited to see us

and over time he shared how much it meant to have us there. While this was recommended for mentor's to attend, few did that day and I can't tell you how much you miss. It is a chance to really bond and show your mentee that you are committed.

With graduation over and my mentee finally home the work really began. It started by looking for work and pulling on a friendship to get that first job. We maintained our face to face meetings and phone calls as required, but things weren't going as well as I wanted. Old friends re-emerged and old habits began to set in spending money and not accounting in your check register along with not being able to say NO to past transgressions! Talking with his boss I found out that he wasn't always on time to work and when he was there that he lacked initiative quite often. Couple this with family issues and a young lady that came into his life, I was beginning to think, can I impact his life. During this time we continued to meet much more than the minimum time required by the program and finally one evening it came to confrontation and intervention. With his wallet and identification all missing, along with being in debt to his eyeballs, using again and a perceived willingness to continue down this path I put forth some tough love. So with a stern but empathetic voice I said, "I'm here to assist and support you, but I can only help to the extent that you will let me, so what is it to be?" With encouragement and stressing that he can trust me when I said, I will be there for you and things can get better, things took a drastic course change. That very evening the two of us were able to retrieve his wallet and things from the so called "friends."

This lead to piecing together over the next few weeks what this guys were really users! He discovered through our numerous talks they were always around on payday so there would be money for drugs, cigarettes and food. At this same time I continued to discuss his goals from the program and how he was off course and I was there to help him get back on course. At this point, with some new goals and with his commitment to himself to achieve, we were off and running on a new course.

There were numerous things for us to deal with and try to set right. One of our first stops was at the second bank he had an account with. His first one he was on his father's account and due to numerous overdrafts it was closed eventually. At the second bank he had twenty three overdrafts on such things as a pack of cigarettes, fast food meals and so forth. Usually the debit amount was under five dollars, while the overdraft amount was twenty three dollars. Needless to say, he was in a deep financial hole. While he isn't exactly an outgoing type and his social skills at the time were limited, it was time to model the skills needed to make it in the world. So, with his okay, I explained the program that he was involved with and that I was his mentor. Well, we dealt with the assistant manager and she was our angel as she deleted all the overdrafts and helped us bring the check book register up to date. From here we had many discussions about needs and wants, over stating the amount owed and understating the income (this way there are no surprises) and doing a budget sheet. With this underway and the fact that he had another full time job plus the original part time job, things were on there way. Sure, we continued to have our issue with wants over needs, but this even got across and he became much savvier. And he can say today, I've got money in savings, started a retirement account and he has had no overdrafts since this past December. All through this I stayed with one basic message, I believe in you and I believe you can do this and he did.



**From:** Don Barber [<mailto:thehammer39@hotmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 08, 2013 2:10 PM  
**To:** Strupith Frank A  
**Subject:** You're doing a great job with my son Donald Barber

Frank / OYCP,

I couldn't be happier. I just picked Donnie up this morning at 0800 and I cried. What a wonderful feeling to see my son come out of that door. What a wonderful feeling to see & hear the young man that came home with me today. I knew that OYCP was the right thing to do, and it sure is looking like I was right. Donnie says he loves it there. he says it's tough, but he loves it and he wants to come back and complete. he's already talking about the national guard, and completing his senior year at Barlow High School, etc.

I didn't want to wait to say THANK YOU!

I really appreciate you and everyone involved in OYCP. You are doing for Donnie what I couldn't do for him.

Thank You from the bottom of my heart.

If there is ever anything that I can do for OYCP, please let me know.

Don Barber

Casey Husk  
61500 SW Longview Street  
Bend, OR 97702  
chusk@cocc.edu

January 2013

I graduated from the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge program in 2003, and while in the program, took advantage of the many opportunities available to cadets. I participated as a member in peer court, as a platoon leader, and served as president of the student government.

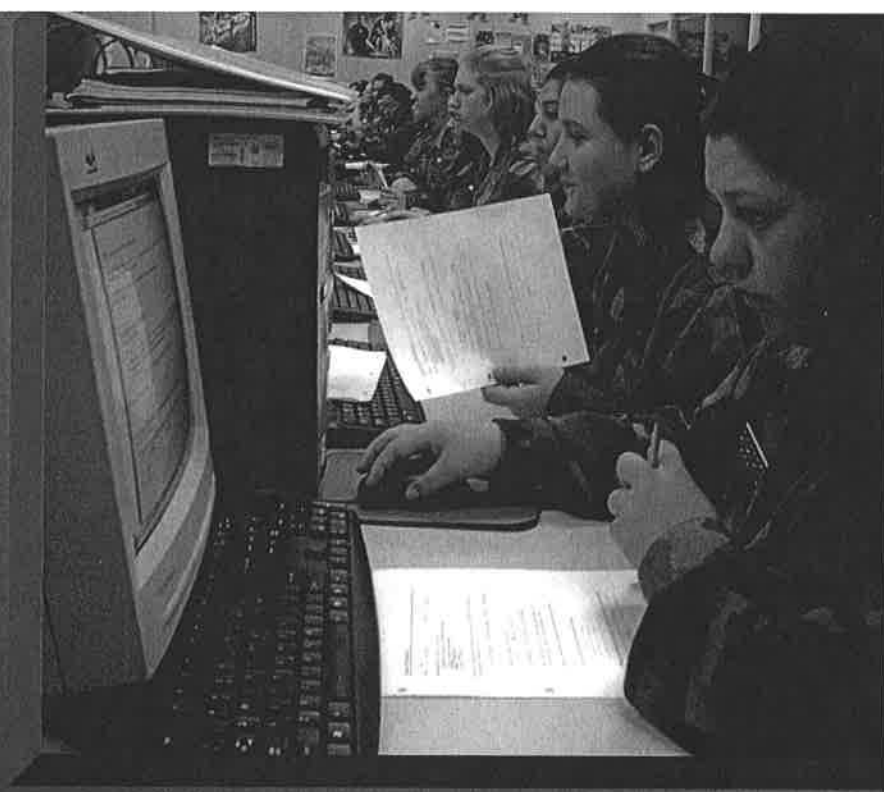
Since leaving the program, I have participated in several charitable organizations, starting out with Volunteers In Medicine in Bend, Oregon, as a clinical support volunteer and college freshman. After a year of working with VIM, I set out on my own in the summer of 2010 to work in Ecuador through an opportunity of my own creation. That initial, two-month trip was such a success that I turned it into a program for other pre-medical students. Now in its third year, Cascade Medical Ambassadors has provided the opportunity for more than a dozen students and three physicians to experience third-world medical care. As founder and president, I've led the trip to Ecuador every year and have recruited dedicated volunteers who will ensure that the program continues in the future. I was honored by the faculty at Central Oregon Community College as featured speaker at the faculty convocation in June 2012 and have been selected as one of two students to receive the Oregon All-Academic Team award in late 2012.

In addition to my volunteering activities, I work as a tutor in both chemistry and math, and sell firearms at the local Dick's Sporting Goods. I am currently a full-time engineering student at Oregon State University. With a degree in mechanical engineering, I hope to combine my ability to "think outside of the box" with the problem-solving skills of an engineer for use in humanitarian missions worldwide.

I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program.

Casey





# Oregon National Guard Youth ChalleNge Program



Dan Radabaugh  
Director



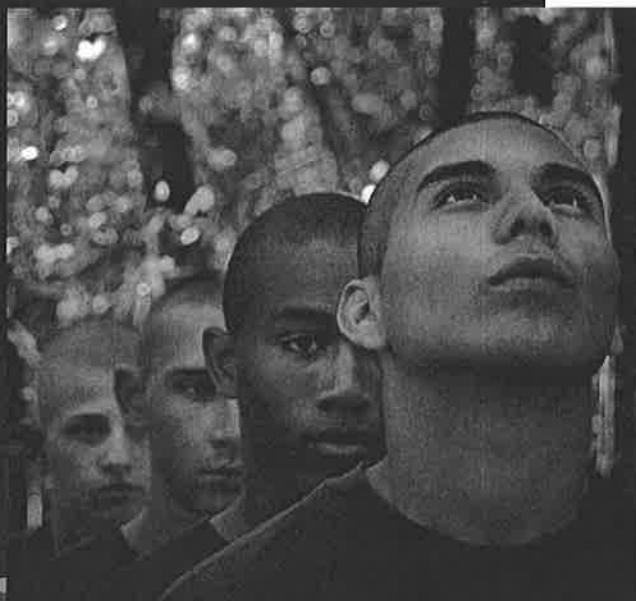
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## Oregon

MILITARY  
DEPARTMENT

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# National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program



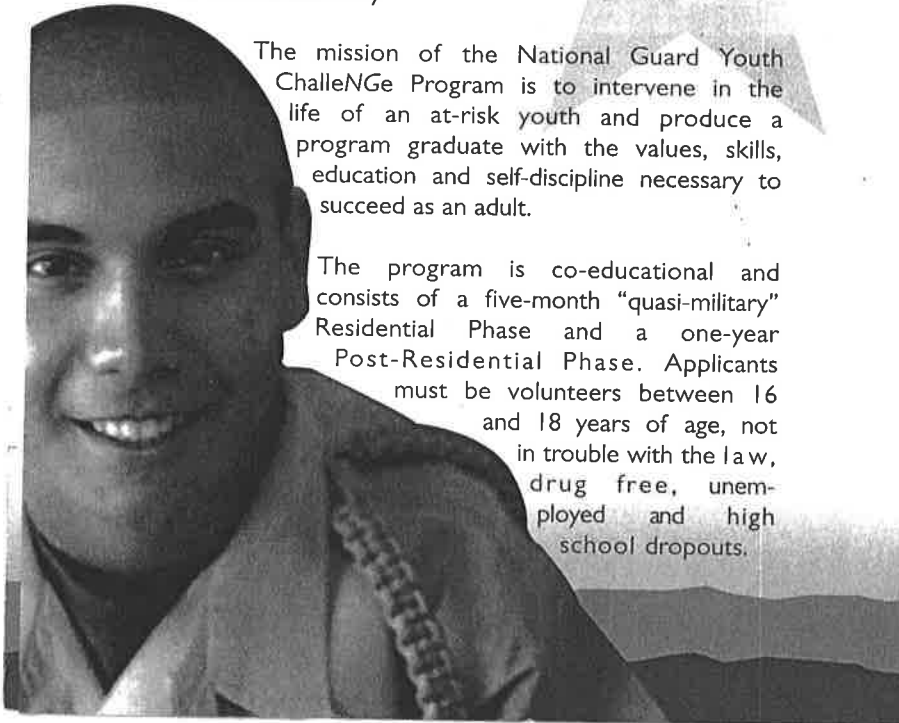
## ChalleNGe Program Beginnings

Today more than one million young Americans between 16 and 19 years of age drop out of school before acquiring the skills and personal traits necessary to enable them to find employment and a better life in the future. At the same time, our nation is facing an epidemic in juvenile crime and delinquency of historic proportion. A typical day sees over 5,000 young men and women under the age of 18 arrested. Over 4% of these arrests are for violent crimes.

The National Guard is Hometown America with deep roots in every community. Its strong community ties make the National Guard a highly visible and effective entity in many towns and communities across the United States. Involved are National Guard men and women who, in their civilian lives, are influential across the spectrum of business, education and government. National Guard units across the country have traditionally been involved in youth programs designed to help young people become positive and productive members of their community.

The mission of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program is to intervene in the life of an at-risk youth and produce a program graduate with the values, skills, education and self-discipline necessary to succeed as an adult.

The program is co-educational and consists of a five-month "quasi-military" Residential Phase and a one-year Post-Residential Phase. Applicants must be volunteers between 16 and 18 years of age, not in trouble with the law, drug free, unemployed and high school dropouts.





# DREAM ★ BELIEVE ★ ACHIEVE

## PRE-CHALLENGE PHASE

The program begins with a two-week Pre-Challenge Phase during which applicants are assessed to determine their potential for successfully completing the program. This phase allows applicants an opportunity to adjust to the physical, mental and social discipline of the program. The focus is on teamwork, close order drill, leadership and followership practicums, code of conduct, and physical fitness training. For those applicants who successfully complete this phase, they earn the distinction of becoming a full-fledged cadet. Over 90% of these cadets will successfully complete the program.

## RESIDENTIAL PHASE

The five-month Residential Phase provides cadets opportunities to make basic lifestyle changes that are approached through a rigorous program of education, training, and service to community. During this phase cadets focus on eight core components that develop the whole person in terms of mind, body and personal values. Emphasis is on self-discipline, self-esteem, education and development of healthy lifestyles.

## POST-RESIDENTIAL PHASE

The Post-Residential Phase begins when graduates return to their communities and implement their life plans. Each graduate is matched with a caring adult mentor who serves as a consistent and positive role model for the next 12 months. The link between mentoring and the program's eight core components make the Challenge program unique and increases the chances for the continued success of its graduates.

## PROGRAM CORE COMPONENTS

### LEADERSHIP/FOLLOWERSHIP

Learn positive leadership and followership responsibilities and positive roles within social groups.

### RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP

Understand the civic responsibilities and the role of positive citizen within the community.

### ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Increase grade levels in reading and mathematics, attain GED or high school diploma and pursue higher education.

### JOB SKILLS

Learn basic employment skills, resume writing, job interview techniques and career exploration.

### LIFE COPING SKILLS

Learn personal financial management, teamwork skills, anger management, and drug and alcohol avoidance strategies.

### HEALTH AND HYGIENE

Understand nutrition basics, substance abuse awareness and positive personal relationships.

### SERVICE TO COMMUNITY

Give back to the community by performing a minimum of 40 hours of service to community.

### PHYSICAL FITNESS

Improve personal fitness through daily exercise activities and intramural sports.





## ChalleNGe

A National Guard community based program  
that leads, trains and mentors at-risk youth so that  
they may become productive citizens in America's future.



WE SUPPORT  
SECOND CHANCES



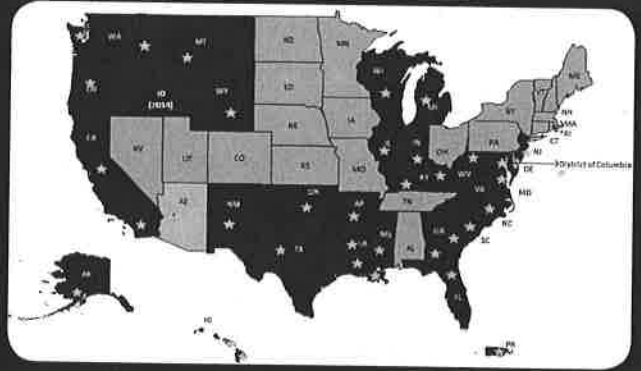
## ChalleNGe Program States



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Office of Athletics and Youth Development  
Jefferson Plaza I, Room 2456  
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Arlington, VA 22202-3231  
For more information please call  
800.252.8959  
[www.ngycp.org](http://www.ngycp.org)



**N**ational  
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**Y**outh  
**C**hallenge  
**P**rogram



***Dream. Believe. Achieve.***

[www.ngycp.org](http://www.ngycp.org)





**I**n 2008 I made a decision that changed my life. I wanted to be somebody and show my family that I could make them proud of me. So I chose to be part of the Puerto Rico National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Academy. It was a tough process; being away from my family and friends was a great ChalleNGe. I had a hard time adjusting to living with total strangers that had more complicated problems than my own. I cried so much and even felt I would not make it to the end, but as the days went by I acquired goals, discipline and strength within me. I completed the program and obtained my high school diploma in March 2011. I was thrilled to see my family proud of me. Life after ChalleNGe made me see things differently; I obtained the resources I needed to dare to be somebody. Today I am proud to be a Law Enforcement Officer and to help my country's citizens.

– Wilmarie Rodriguez Solla

**“That program transformed her whole trajectory in life.”** *Tee's sister Nicole*

**I** was born and raised in Chicago and raised in the foster care system. I was eventually adopted, but became what society labels a 'troubled teen'. At the age of 16 I was expelled from school. This was a turning point in my life. I enrolled in the Lincoln ChalleNGe Academy in Rantoul, Illinois. The program gave me a small taste of the military lifestyle and taught me the fundamentals of teamwork and how to be part of something bigger than myself. The skills and camaraderie I gained from ChalleNGe helped to plant the seed that led me to a career in the military. Nearly twenty years later I am still serving as a Marine and am the CEO/Founder of a non-profit mentorship organization, living happily with my husband and two daughters.

– GySgt Tawanda “Tee” Marie Hanible





Youth Challenge **NGe** is a new beginning for those young men and women who need a change; for those that want to take control of their lives and prepare themselves for the next test, the Real World.

**I** graduated from the Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge program in 2003, and while in the program, took advantage of the many opportunities available to Cadets. I participated as a member in peer court, as a platoon leader, and served as president of the student government.

Since leaving the program, I have participated in several charitable organizations, starting out with Volunteers In Medicine in Bend, Oregon, as a clinical support volunteer and college freshman. I was honored by the faculty at Central Oregon Community College as featured speaker at the faculty convocation in June 2012 and have been selected as one of two students to receive the Oregon All-Academic Team award in late 2012.

In addition to my volunteering activities, I am currently a full-time engineering student at Oregon State University. With a degree in mechanical engineering, I hope to combine my ability to "think outside of the box" with the problem-solving skills of an engineer for use in humanitarian missions worldwide.

– Casey Husk





## **The National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program**

### **Fast Facts**

- A multi-phased intervention program
- Targets high school dropouts between the ages of 16 & 18
- A structured, disciplined 5 1/2 month Residential Phase focusing on education and practical life skills followed by a 12-month Post-Residential Phase involving skilled and trained Mentors supporting Graduates engaged in positive, durable placement
- More than 113,000 Graduates since inception in 1993

### **The ChalleNGe Model**

- Administered by the Department of Defense and implemented by the National Guard Bureau
- Military-based discipline and training combined with educational instruction, experiential learning, and mentoring
- Goal to improve education, life skills, and employment potential of participants

### **ChalleNGe Eligibility Criteria**

- Economically and educationally disadvantaged youth from within each state, commonwealth, or territory hosting a program
- High school dropouts between 16 and 18 years of age
- Voluntary enrollment
- Unemployed or underemployed
- Drug free
- Not on parole or probation for other than juvenile status offenses, not indicted or charged, and free of felony convictions or capital offenses
- Physically and mentally capable to participate in the program with reasonable accommodation for physical and other disabilities



## **THE CORE COMPONENTS**

### **Academic Excellence**

Daily classes increase math and reading comprehension, preparing Cadets for General Education Development (GED) credential testing or high school diploma.

### **Life Coping Skills**

Cadets learn how to identify and self-regulate emotions, such as anger, grief, frustration, and stress, and how to identify conflict resolution strategies.

### **Job Skills**

Career exploration is accomplished through career assessment and interest inventories, job-specific skills orientation, and training in area vocational centers.

### **Health and Hygiene**

Cadets learn the value of a healthy, well-balanced lifestyle, physical and mental well-being, and the effects of substance abuse and sexually transmitted diseases.

### **Responsible Citizenship**

Cadets discover their role in the democratic process and learn their rights, privileges, and obligations as United States citizens.

### **Service to the Community**

Cadets realize the value and importance of giving back to the community while performing a minimum of 40 hours of community service.

### **Leadership/Followership**

Cadets learn to willingly comply with established rules, regulations, and procedures; perform basic military customs and courtesies; and define and recognize leadership skills, traits, dimensions, and components.

### **Physical Fitness**

Cadets perform physical training based on the President's Challenge, the Amateur Athletic Union Physical Fitness Program, and the Canada Fitness Award Program.



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*"All of my life's success I attribute to the drive and discipline that the ChalleNGe program gave me to be a productive member of society and most of all an American!"*

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Growing up, I was not the stereotypical at risk youth. I came from a wonderful family. A lack of discipline was my problem in school. I acted out through fighting, stealing and other illegal activities. I was on a fast-paced road to becoming a statistic and dropping out of school. My family and friends knew my future was likely jail but they also knew there was more inside me. My parents and supporters never gave up on me and finally asked if I wanted to make a drastic change and go to Thunderbird Youth ChalleNGe Academy. I had no idea what to expect from the Youth ChalleNGe program but I did not hesitate in saying "YES".

ChalleNGe opened me up to a world of discipline and opportunity. I learned core values that I hold near and dear to my heart. Who I am today is directly attributed to the ChalleNGe program. I do not remember the names of some of the teachers from my youth; but I remember every instructor from the Academy as each one had a hand in making me the man I am today.

I joined the Army while in the program and one week after graduating from the Academy left for basic training. Next to attending ChalleNGe, this was the best decision I made in my life.

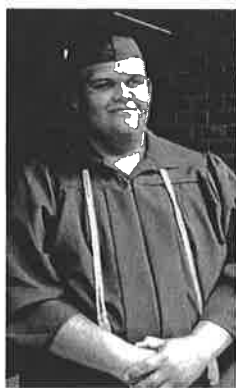
Today, I am a Command Security Manager for the United States Navy. Over the past six years, I founded two international corporations. I am loved and supported by my five-year-old daughter, 20 month old son, and my wife of six years who is pregnant with our third child due on 11 September 2013.

Thunderbird ChalleNGe urged Cadets to pursue education and to never stop learning. I am proud to say I've earned my Associates Degree in Police Science; Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Intelligence; Master's Degree in Defense Management and within the next 15-20 months, I should be Dr. Sparky Edwards, having earned my Ph.D. in Criminal Justice.

**- Sparky Edwards**







## ***How YCP Changed My Life***

**M**y experience at the Youth Challenge Program (YCP) has given me many useful tools. It has changed my life. It taught me things that will help me in my journey through life and all of the obstacles that I will face.

My life wasn't bad before YCP, but I wasn't at my full potential. I was lazy, unmotivated, and without goals. I was only just starting the 10th grade, but I was also about to be expelled and I didn't even care. I felt as though my life was falling apart. I was told about YCP and thought I would give it a try.

YCP was a blessing in disguise. My family and teachers had always told me how smart I was if I just tried, but I never did try. At YCP, I scored college level on all the placement tests. I took my ACT test and got a 26, which is really good for a Sophomore in High School. I scored a 90 on the ASVAB, which means that I scored better than 90% of everyone else who took the test nationwide. I took the GED and got the highest score in my company. My high scores on the GED and ACT got me accepted into Louisiana State University in Shreveport. I was 16 when I started college. If I can stay on track in the Degree program I am in, I could potentially have a Master's Degree by the time I am 20.

My counselor and instructor at YCP recommended me for a scholarship for college and I received \$1,667 at graduation. After graduation I found out that I had also been awarded a scholarship for \$5,000 a year for four years. Because of our financial situation, it was going to be difficult for me to attend college. Thanks to YCP, I don't have to worry about that.

Life is still tough, but YCP gave me self-confidence, motivation, and hope for a better future.

**- Jonathon Keeling**

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*"YCP was a blessing in disguise. My family and teachers had always told me how smart I was if I just tried, but I never did try."*

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**N**ational  
**G**uard  
**Y**outh  
**C**hallenge  
**P**rogram



**DREAM** 

**ACHIEVE**



If you are an individual who is between the ages of 16 to 18 and are either dropped out of high school, or are at risk of being a drop out based on your class standing, then perhaps you could use a change of course to put your life back on track to a brighter future.



Make the call, get informed and take charge!

**After all it's YOUR Life!**

**Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge**

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## • 8 Core Components

Academic Excellence

Life Coping Skills

Job Skills

Health and Hygiene

Responsible Citizenship

Service to Community

Leadership/ Followership

Physical Fitness

# OREGON NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH CHALLENGE PROGRAM

"A ONE TIME SECOND CHANCE!"

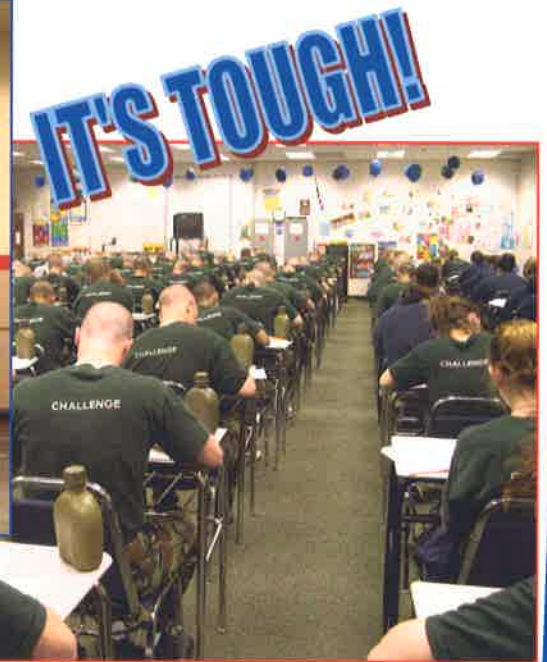


## THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

### OYCP



**IT WORKS!**

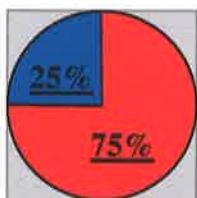


The Oregon National Guard Youth Challenge Program is a Federally funded and State matched (75/25 split) non-traditional education program that provides opportunities for personal growth and academic achievement for Oregon high school dropouts and those failing in school through a highly structured non-traditional environment!

#### FUNDING

**STATE**

**FEDERAL**



**DREAM!**

**BELIEVE!**

**ACHIEVE!**

#### **OREGON NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH CHALLENGE PROGRAM**

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