

Appalachian ChallaNGe Advantage



Kentucky National Guard Youth Challenge Program
VOLUME XXVIII, ISSUE IV

Academy Newsletter
APRIL 2026



Commandant's Cup

The Commandant's Cup, challeNGing the physical, strategy, and scholarly abilities of our Cadets. Events include Drill and Ceremony, Flag Football, Track, Chess, Spelling Bee, Basketball, Trivia, Volleyball, Softball, Soccer, E-Sports, and Cornhole.



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IMPORTANT DATES:

Cadet Virtual Family Days
25-26 April

Artemis FTX
27-29 April

Blackhawk
5 May

Interstate Games
13-14 May



Dual Credit



Dual Credit classes at the Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College are offered to eligible cadets and award them with the opportunity to gain college credit and, in some courses, a certification. Cadets this cycle are able to take welding courses. We are proud of our partnership with Southeast, as it helps us to provide additional opportunities to make our cadets' lives successful with skills that can be used for future employment and self improvement.



ASVAB Testing

C28 ASVAB recently put in the effort to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) which is a multiple-aptitude battery that measures developed abilities and helps predict future academic and occupational success in the military. It is administered annually to more than one million military applicants, high school, and post-secondary students.

Recently our Cadets were given the ASVAB Test. This does not mean they are signing up to go into the Armed Services. It is a test given to all of our Cadets, and the ones that find that they are interested, a second test will be given to those individuals later on in the cycle to see if they can improve on their score.



Community



Recently Cadets have put in some service to their community in multiple opportunities. Whether it is at Christ's Hands building food boxes or cleanup at Martins Fork Lake, giving service to our community strengthens the ideals of our "Service to Community" Core Component. In this one of eight core components Cadets gain an understanding of the benefits of volunteering their time and services to assist others in need and to maintain a clean, safe environment in which all citizens can live. This component provides hands on experiences in performing community service opportunities in and around Harlan, KY area.



Service
To Our
Community



Cadet Achievements



Level 3.5 SFC

Week 12 Promotions

Adams	Hinkle	Perkins	Thompson
Allen	Kelsay, Bra	Pogrotsky	Tieman
Caskey	Krupp	Romero	Volker
Corey	Lankford	Scott	Wallace
Dickerson	McMillian	Sexton	Walls, G
Donathan	McQueary	Shown	Walls, K
Dragoo	Neace	Smith, C	Warmouth
Durham	Neely	Smith, D	Whiting
Foley, Dak	Neese	Snyder	Worley
Foley, Dav	Ottesen-Price	Thacker	

**Level 3.5
Sergeant First
Class (SFC)**



Level 3 SSG

Burchett, M	Ervin	Jordan	Pennington
Conley-Cole	Escalante	Klopp	Smith, W
Cotton	Hall	Mardis	Sullivan, C
Darling	Hammond	Martin	Sullivan, T
Davis	Hiler	Maynard	Swann
Eckler	Humfleet	Mowen	Tingle

**Level 3
Staff Sergeant
(SSG)**



Level 2.5 SGT

Ackerson	Cook	Lockhart	Shears
Baker	Drake	Payne	Sheperd
Blackburn	Gohman	Peters	Starr
Bowers	Hester	Phipps	Stephens
Caddell	Kelsay, Bry	Provence	

**Level 2.5
Sergeant (SGT)**



Level 2 CPL

Collins	Jones, B	Ruiz-Taylor
Goodlett	League	Tolliver

**Level 1.5
Private First
Class (PFC)**



Level 1.5 PFC

Awdish	Russell	Wilson
Cofield	Stroer	

**Level 1
Private
(PVT)**



Level 1 PVT

Coffey	Fedders	Pearson	Schaller
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Post Residential Testimonial



We would like to introduce you to Kyle, a graduate of the residential portion of the Appalachian Challenge Academy. He is currently in our post residential program where a Resource Advocate is in contact with him monthly the first year and the second year contact is made quarterly.

A bit of Kyle's story, "When I came to the ACA, I was on drugs I was fighting all the time. I didn't know what to expect when I first got there, I didn't think that place would help me but it did. I went from being the worst kid ever to the best kid, not the best because we all make mistakes, but you know after the ACA I got out and I started working but before the aca I didn't work. I was lazy depressed, always in my room after I got out though, now I'm always working 10 and 12 hours a day."

While at the ACA, our post residential team shares with and prepares the cadets for the post residential portion of our program. Kyle shares his thoughts of while he was hearing about this vital part of our program. "I thought you all was crazy I didn't think you all would actually be a resource like you all said, I didn't think you guys would help us."

After some life events that occurred recently in Kyle's life, he continued to share with us "but when I needed you, you was there because I stayed in contact with you all every month like I was. You all did what you said you would, and my Resource Advocate helped me out when 'life happened', being there when I needed you." Kyle says the ACA "can help you go a long way, it's hard at the ACA but it is the challenge academy for a reason to, challenge yourself!"

Our team doesn't stop the day of graduation from the residential portion of our program. Instead we actively seek to be a resource for each of our graduates helping them find their success in each part of their lives. Often like Kyle, the idea that someone really will be there when hard or difficult things happen isn't realized until a real need arises, but we all know "life happens". Few things motivate us more than knowing that someone who cares will be checking in on our progress and ready to encourage our success. That is the mission of the Appalachian Challenge Academy's post residential team, to see every one of our graduates be their very best!

Recruiting News

Now Accepting New Applications for Class 029

Meet our Recruiting Admissions Team

Spring 2026 Orientation Dates

All times are from 3pm to 7pm

Somerset Holiday Inn

50 Stevie Lynn LN

April 13

May 4

May 26

June 15

London Holiday Inn (exit 38)

506 Minton Drive

April 14

May 5

May 26

June 16

Lexington Holiday Inn

(exit 108 Hamburg)

1976 Justice Drive

April 15

May 6

May 27

June 17

Florence Holiday Inn/

Cincinnati Airport

1055 Vandecar Way

April 16

May 7

May 28

June 18

Williamsburg Hampton Inn

(exit 11)

530 KY 92

May 8

May 29

June 19



Rusty Bailey



Dexter Day



Eric Gray

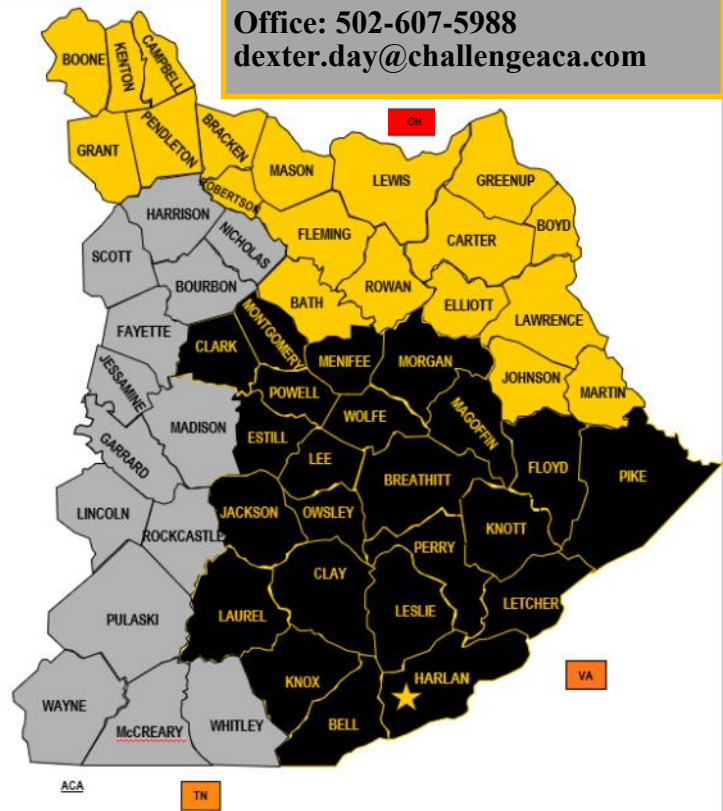


Sarah Lawson

Rusty Bailey
Cell: 606-344-2900
rusty.bailey@challengeaca.com

Eric Gray
Cell: 606-371-3436
eric.gray@challengeaca.com

Dexter Day
Cell: 606-273-8044
Office: 502-607-5988
dexter.day@challengeaca.com



**WE'RE NOT TELLING YOU
IT'S GOING TO BE EASY**

**WE'RE TELLING YOU
IT'S GOING TO BE WORTH IT!!!**



ENROLLMENT NOW OPEN



DREAM

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF & NEVER GIVE UP!

BELIEVE

THINK POSITIVE & ALWAYS GIVE YOUR ALL

ACHIEVE

ALWAYS ENCOURAGE & DREAM BIG!

**CLASS 29 STARTS
JULY 12, 2026**

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION: WWW.2ABETTERME.COM

 FACEBOOK.COM/ACAHARLAN

 INSTAGRAM.COM/ACA4CHANGE

The Appalachian Challenge Academy is a 22 week, quasi-military program dedicated to advancing foundational development of regional youth. With a focus on 15^{1/2}-18 year olds, it is our goal to provide a diverse skillset through our Eight Core Components that will prepare them to successfully transition into adulthood and create the future they set their sights on. If you would like more information or are interested in joining our community of support, feel free to contact us.

Appalachian Challenge Academy

465 Grays Drive, Grays Knob, KY 40829

Admin Office: 606-574-0303 Toll Free: 855-596-4927

admissions@challengeaca.com