



The Bluegrass Bugle



Volume 50 Issue 04 | Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy Newsletter

Bringing home the trophy!

What a month it has been for the Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy! The biggest event, the Tri-State Invitational (featured in an article below) has come and gone, and the BYCA took home the Tri-State Trophy! The cadets have been amped and exhilarated with their performances from Tri-State and have been talking about it non-stop. The momentum is at an all-time high at the Academy, as we now begin to focus on graduation and making sure all the cadets here walk the stage! The effort these cadets continue to put forth will undoubtedly be rewarded ten fold come graduation day!

“If it doesn’t challenge you, it won’t change you.”

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Out and about at the Academy!

Over the last month, our cadets have got to experience even more activities both at the Academy and around the Fort Knox area! One of the bigger events that several of our cadets got to participate in was the Color Run 5K right here on Post. Another event that was popular among cadets was the return trip to Hardin County Skateland in Radcliff, KY during the month of April. Perhaps one of the biggest events that happened was the solar eclipse that had 97% coverage in the Ft, Knox area. A handful of cadets were taken just north to experience the totality of the eclipse in what was truly a once in a lifetime event! The cadets who had been attending the Honorable Men services with Mr. Kennedy at Heritage International Christian Church graduated from that program as well this month! In the coming month, we have even more opportunities for the cadets including the Capitol Tour, beginning their vocational courses with Pleasant View Baptist Church, and another opportunity to donate blood with the Red Cross Blood Drive! We hope to share as much as we can over the final weeks with these cadets!

Commandant's Corner

“When I say I am so proud of each and every one of our cadets, that would be an understatement. I put out in our last newsletter that our focus would be tri-state, tri-state, tri-state and that we would be bringing that overall 1st place trophy home. With hard work and dedication, these cadets brought our trophy back home. To see the pride on their faces when we won, will forever be close to my heart. Class 50 brought us the gold. Let's go BCA! Let's continue to strive for the best, continue to build and grow in amazing ways. The finish line is near and each and everyone of you can reach it. That same determination that was used in Tri-state is the same determination that will guide you on the right path in life. Keep up the amazing work. “

CSM J. Sanders



Our cadets participating in several activities!





The Thunder over Louisville experience!

Our cadets recently enjoyed an exhilarating day amidst the soaring aircraft and thunderous performances of the Thunder Over Louisville air show. The annual event captivates audiences with its dazzling aerial displays and vibrant atmosphere. For the cadets, however, this experience was not just about entertainment; it was an opportunity for inspiration and learning. Amidst the excitement of the air show, the cadets also had the privilege of exploring the Kentucky Air National Guard Hangar, located adjacent to the event venue. From learning about aircraft maintenance and logistics to understanding the roles and responsibilities of military personnel, the cadets gained valuable insights into the workings of a vital component of national defense. The visit to the hangar served as more than just a tour; it was a chance for the cadets to envision potential paths for their future. In the vast blue skies above, the cadets had discovered that with determination and perseverance, they too could reach new heights and make their dreams take flight.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

CSM Sanders
Commandant



CSM Sanders is the definition of working your way to the top. When she first started at the Academy, CSM Sanders was a cadre for the Wolfpack platoon and would eventually become Cadre Supervisor. She then moved from Cadre Supervisor to Logistics, and is now Commandant of the Academy! If there is one thing that CSM Sanders completely excels at, it is holding both cadre and the cadets accountable. Having worked in multiple areas, CSM Sanders knows the expectations and the standards that are required of the Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy. We couldn't be more thrilled for CSM Sanders being the one to oversee the Academy!

Upcoming Events

May 6: Capitol Tour & Black Hawk Ride

May 21: Red Cross Blood Drive

May 25: Family Day

June 15: Graduation





The Tri-State Invitational!

Without a doubt the Tri-State Invitational was one of the most anticipated events of the cycle for our cadets. From the opening ceremony and words of encouragement bestowed upon them all the way until the end of the awards presentation, the cadets from Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy, Appalachian Youth Challenge Academy, Hoosier Youth Challenge Academy, and the Michigan Youth Challenge Academy shared their excitement and pride of accomplishment over the three day competition.

All four Academies participated in a variety of sports, chess, a spelling bee, and drill and ceremony to determine the overall Tri-State champion. The Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy finished with the following results:

1st Place: Boys Track, Cornhole, Flag Football, Softball, Volleyball

2nd Place: Boys Basketball, Chess, Drill and Ceremony, Girls Basketball

3rd Place: Girls Track

4th Place: Spelling Bee

The Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy finished first overall and brought home the Tri-State trophy, Michigan finished as runner-up. With the competition gaining traction among other Academies, it may need to be renamed to the Regional Invitational in the near future!



The Joy of Tri-State

By Cadet Zachary Peek



I'm Cadet Peek and I participated in multiple events during the Tri-State Challenge. I competed in volleyball, softball, cornhole, drill and ceremony, and the spelling bee. I spent every week leading up to Tri-State working on perfecting every aspect of the sports I was competing in. Each day was a different practice for sports during lunch or after school. It was nice to take a little break from the monotony of everyday BCA life and to have something to work towards as a team with my peers. We dominated Tri-State this year and got five first place trophies!

Tri-State was an amazing team building event. It gave us all a chance to grow as a team within the whole Academy. It was a great chance for me as an individual to improve my own anger management and work ethic. Tri-State also helped me realize that sometimes trying new things is for the best; before Tri-State, I had never considered playing a sport such as volleyball and I turned out to be really good at it. I am extremely grateful that Col. Briscoe and CSM Sanders were able to plan and put this event together for us and compete against the other academies. I'm glad we brought the trophy back home to the BCA!

Tri-State Champion,
Cadet Peek



We asked a few of our cadets their favorite school subject and p.t. activity, as well as how the program has helped them since arriving!



“My favorite school subject is art, and my favorite p.t. activity is running. BCA has helped me get back on track to finish my junior year and control my anger. SFC Holmes has helped me the most because he always gives me advice on everything.” - Cadet Faulkner

“Science is my favorite school subject and doing full body or dance routines for p.t. is my favorite activity. The program has helped me realize that I needed to change not only for me but for those I care about. SFC Music has helped me the most by showing me how to change and by changing what the hard work means.” - Cadet Priddy



“My favorite subject is biology and push-ups are my favorite p.t. activity. The BCA has helped me lose weight and get caught up in school. Mr. Haertel when he was a cadre was always there to talk to and easy to get along with.” - Cadet McMillen



“My favorite school subject is history because it just comes easy to me, and my favorite p.t. has got to be leg day. The BCA has helped me through a lot. At the beginning, I was ready to go off on anyone at any moment but I have learned not everyone is worth risking your peace. I still struggle with this but for the most part I have grown with this concept. SFC Barton has helped me the most since being at BCA, she has helped me realize misplacing my anger won't gain me anything but enemies.” - Cadet Collins



“My favorite school subject is history because I like learning about my country's past, and my favorite p.t. activity is carrying a tire across the field with a partner. BCA has helped me be teaching me self-discipline, and not to do whatever I want when I want. It has also helped me become tough mentally. SGT Fraim has helped me the most since I've been here. He has helped me by letting me know God will help me through this program and when I'm upset, he will cheer me up by making jokes.” - Cadet Noel



“Math is my favorite subject because it is easy for my brain to comprehend; I don't have a favorite p.t. activity as I enjoy all of them. The BCA has instilled that military aspect way of life that will help me in the military. All the staff and cadre have helped me in a different aspect for each situation that happens in the life of any cadet.” - Cadet Tarpy



“My favorite school subject is science and my favorite p.t. activity is either running or playing softball. Since starting the BCA, I have learned much better self control and to think before I act out or speak. SFC Scalia has helped me a lot by having good man to man conversations when I mess up and being there for me no matter what. When I graduate the program, I plan to go to JobCorps then open up my own computer repair shop someday.” - Cadet Embry



“My favorite school subject is history and my favorite p.t. activity is leg day. BCA has helped me since the beginning by encouraging me to do better. All of the female cadre have helped me in one way or another. SFC Gay gives me encouraging talks and SFC Barton is nice to talk to when I'm upset. All of the cadre encourage and believe in me.” - Cadet Cooney



CENTER-STAGE CADETS



“My favorite school subject is English and my favorite p.t. activity is leg day because I am stronger in my legs, so it’s easy for me. The BCA has helped me since the beginning because I have learned to control my emotions. I have learned self-respect and had time to think about what I want to do with my life and fix my wrong doings. Being here, I have been able to fix relationships I had broken. SFC Music has helped me the most because she saw my sister, so she was a bit harder on my so I did not repeat any of my sisters mistakes. She pushes me everyday to be better and inspires me. When I finish the BCA, I want to go home and finish high school, go to college on the beach, and make my future better than my past while spending every last moment with my family.”

- Cadet Morbach, Directors Platoon Wolverines



“Math would have to be one of my favorite school subjects and my favorite p.t. activity is when we do abs. The BCA has helped me with a lot of things like controlling my anger and trying to listen to people instead of talking over them. In the beginning, I was always getting in trouble or causing a ruckus but getting to know people and talk to them here made me realize that if I keep acting the way I was, I was just going to be keep acting a fool so I wanted to show I am better than that. SFC Patro and my therapist have helped me while here at BCA, if it wasn’t for them I would probably be in a cell waiting for my life to hit a dead end. They have taught me that no matter what is in my way, there’s always a way around it instead of fighting it. When I graduate, I plan on going home and joining either the Navy or Marines when I turn 18.”

- Cadet Vance, 3rd Platoon Blackhawks

Message from the Deputy Director:

“Our cadets put in an extraordinary amount of work and it showed at Tri-State! We couldn’t be more proud of the way they played in each event, staying humble, and showing true sportsmanship to one another. We hope they continue to put in the same amount of work over the last six weeks to reach that finish line at graduation!”

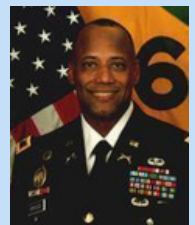


**Scott Brown, Deputy Director
Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy**

Message from the Director:

“Parents/Guardians—

We are less than a few weeks away from family day and five weeks until we celebrate Bluegrass Challenge Academy Class #50 Graduation and our 25th Anniversary! Class #50 has been doing a phenomenal job, and I cannot express in words my appreciation of your continued support and encouragement you have given our cadets. Class #50 brought home the “Gold” during the Spring 2024 Tri-State Competition. I was so proud of our cadets because they put the hard work in during their practices and it showed during the tri-state competition. I look forward to seeing everyone during family day and please do not hesitate to email or call us if you need anything.... HOOAH!



**Col. (R) Detrick Briscoe, Director
Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy**

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