



# The Bluegrass Bugle

Volume 50 Issue 01 | Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy Newsletter

## *The cycle begins anew*

Class 50 has hit the ground running! During this acclimation phase, the candidates have learned the policies and procedures of the Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy and what our expectations are of them. They have already begun to learn drill and ceremony, studying their Cadet Blue Book for potential promotions, and getting active with physical training. We hope to provide many experiences for these candidates during the residential phase as we have with previous classes. Now it's time for each and every candidate to put in the work!

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

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## *A Brief Intro of the BYCA*

The Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy has been housed on Ft. Knox, KY since 1999. Class 50 is a remarkable class for us because we will be celebrating our 25th anniversary during this cycle! Since becoming an Academy, over 4,000 cadets have graduated from the Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy. In 2017, the BYCA partnered with Eminence Independent Schools to become a school district, so that any credits that are earned during the residential phase will transfer with a cadet going back to their traditional high-school; and those that are able to receive a high school diploma can do so through EIS as well! As the candidates work their way through the acclimation and residential phases, the 12 month post-residential phase will follow. Mentors will report during this phase, as the goal is to make sure graduates don't fall back into habits or influences they previously found themselves in. Many of the youth that come through the Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy over the years have gone on to join the military, decided on a university and enrolled, or figured out exactly what career path they want to take in life. One thing they all tend to agree on, is that the BYCA changed their life for the better!

### **Commandant's Corner**

We welcomed Class 50 through the doors and while some of them were hesitant at first, they are eager to learn and get settled in. It will be tough but the end result is always rewarding, not only for the families, but for the candidate themselves. As they begin to enter the residential phase of the program, please continue to encourage your youth. Even the smallest sentiments will make their day. Now it's up to each candidate to put the work in!

CSM M. Davis



*Our candidates participating in several activities!*



## The Eight Core Components

From Day 1, the eight core components of the Bluegrass Youth Challenge Program are what we instill in the candidates to provide them with the tools for success. Throughout the cycle, they will be tested on each component. The eight core components are as follows:

**Academic Excellence:** Daily classes with on-site certified teachers & principal.

**Life Coping Skills:** Exploring healthy ways to respond to challenges in life.

**Job Skills:** The necessary basic skills to obtain employment.

**Health & Hygiene:** Understanding the positive correlation between good health & hygiene habits.

**Responsible Citizenship:** A better understanding of what makes a community strong & supportive.

**Service to the Community:** Understanding the benefits of volunteering to maintain a clean, safe environment.

**Leadership/Followership:** Learning to become a good follower & developing leadership skills.

**Physical Training:** Improving overall physical health while also promoting mental & emotional wellbeing.



## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Mr. Jacob  
WellFront Case Manager



Adapting to a new environment is tough for anyone, and Mr. Jacob excels at helping the candidates put their mind at ease for the residential phase of the cycle. He is always willing to meet with anyone that may be having a rough day or struggling at any given time. Mr. Jacob also provides many opportunities and extra-curricular activities for the cadets; he is also involved with the volleyball team for Tri-State. Mr. Jacob's connection with the cadets cannot be praised enough as his methods make him a popular staff member for every class that comes through the Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy!

## Challenge Me Creed

It if is to be, it is up to me.

I am in charge of my future.

I will do all I can to make my future a success.

I will not accept failure.

I will succeed.

Challenge me!





### Getting through the Acclimation Phase

For many of the candidates that come through the Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy, the acclimation phase is the toughest part of the entire cycle. In the first two weeks, the candidates learn a whole new routine in their life without the luxuries they had at home. They have spent much of their time how to properly make their bunks and have their wall lockers set correctly, the commands and marching of drill and ceremony, learning how to fold the flag when raising it in the morning and taking it down in the evening, and many different trainings either from our training coordinator, Mrs. Chantz, the cadre, or our therapists with WellFront. Once they make it through acclimation, the rest of the cycle is going to be a breeze for them!



### Looking Ahead

Once the candidates graduate from the acclimation phase and officially begin the residency phase, this is when they will enter their daily routine. Each morning they will wake up, perform any health and hygiene tasks, clean their bay area, and get ready to attend class. Classes run from 0830 to 1130 when they break for lunch chow, then they will re-enter the classroom at 1300 until 1500.

On most days after class, they will perform physical training for no less than 45 minutes. Once Tri-State teams have been formed, they will begin practicing on various days for the various sports. Once Tri-State has concluded, physical training will be held in the afternoons for each platoon again.

The weekends are held with a little more freedom for the cadets. We hope to once again provide outings for them such as bowling, skating, and many others. An outing to the Kentucky State Capitol as well as allowing the cadets to ride in a UH-60 Black Hawk is always a highlight of the cycle.

Each and every Friday beginning in Week 4, promotions will be held for any eligible cadet that has earned their next level rank. As cadets level up to Level 2, Level 3, or possibly Honor Platoon, they earn more privileges. The cadets that have shown they are going above and beyond may find themselves chosen for the coveted Directors Platoon.



# CLASS 50

## 1st Platoon Wolfpack

- Candidate Allen
- Candidate Anderson
- Candidate Branch
- Candidate Collins
- Candidate Cooney
- Candidate Dunivin
- Candidate Jewell
- Candidate Johnson
- Candidate Manica
- Candidate McKernon
- Candidate Morbach
- Candidate Patterson
- Candidate Priddy
- Candidate Richardson
- Candidate Roach
- Candidate Smothers

## 2nd Platoon Bulldogs

- Candidate Asay
- Candidate Babb
- Candidate Briem
- Candidate Brooks-Whitacre
- Candidate Brown
- Candidate Cecil
- Candidate Clary
- Candidate Elliott
- Candidate Elwell
- Candidate Embry
- Candidate Evans
- Candidate Faulkner
- Candidate Flores
- Candidate Gaddie
- Candidate Garner
- Candidate Hammond
- Candidate Hardin
- Candidate Jenkins
- Candidate Kolek
- Candidate Miles
- Candidate Noel
- Candidate Payne
- Candidate Pennella
- Candidate Poncelet-Ross
- Candidate Prado-Jaramillo
- Candidate Skeen
- Candidate Smith, J
- Candidate Tarp
- Candidate Traverzo
- Candidate Waddy
- Candidate Washburn
- Candidate Yonts

## 3rd Platoon Blackhawks

- Candidate Adams
- Candidate Armstrong
- Candidate Beeler
- Candidate Churn
- Candidate Duncan
- Candidate Fogle
- Candidate Hickman
- Candidate Hill
- Candidate Horton
- Candidate Jenkins
- Candidate Kendall
- Candidate Manrique
- Candidate Marquardt
- Candidate McGinnis
- Candidate McMillen
- Candidate Meppen
- Candidate Miles
- Candidate Peek
- Candidate Perez
- Candidate Perkins
- Candidate Ping
- Candidate Polley
- Candidate Prather
- Candidate Rostran
- Candidate Sales-Jimenez
- Candidate Scott
- Candidate Shietze
- Candidate Smith, K
- Candidate Smith, R
- Candidate Vance
- Candidate Wood
- Candidate Wright

### Message from the Deputy Director:

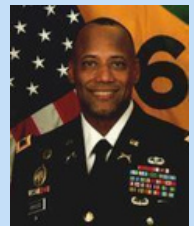
“Class 50 has officially begun and we are excited about the potential that these candidates have already shown us. We want to help them achieve the best they can be while they are at the BCA!”



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

### Message from the Director:

“Greetings: Team BCA is excited to welcome Class #50 to their new home on January 14, 2024 for the next 22 weeks. There's so much plan for these cadets this cycle to include celebrating the academy 25th anniversary and hosting the tri-state competition between Indiana and Michigan at Fort Knox, Kentucky. We will challenge these cadets mentally, physical, emotionally, morally, and spiritually to be a better me. Our hope when these cadets finish this 22-week program, they will have a sense of pride, hope, faith, joy, and love that they can do anything they want to do if they dream, believe, and achieve with hard work, determination, and teamwork.”



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

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