



The Bluegrass Bugle



Volume 50 Issue 03 | Bluegrass Youth ChalleNGe Academy Newsletter

Half-time for Class 50!

At week 11, we are officially at the halfway point of the cycle! With the weather warming up, the opportunities and experiences we will be able to provide to Class 50 have grown exponentially. The Easter Pass also have many of our cadets anxious, both in showing the people at home how they've improved and to be able to maintain the discipline and structure they've been receiving. As we move forward, these cadets will continue to improve and undoubtedly be ready for graduation in another 11 weeks!

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

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Opportunities to service in our community!

Providing service to the community is one of the eight core components of the program of the Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy, and over the last few weeks, they have provided community service for several different organizations. As mentioned in our previous newsletter, many of our cadets participated in a blood drive through the American Red Cross. The following week, Fort Knox First Responders were aided with several cadet volunteers to participate in an exercise to respond to an emergency situation, provide assistance for any of our cadets that the situation called for in the scenario, and hone their skills in doing so. The Wolfpack platoon also spent an afternoon with NABVETS (the National Association for Black Veterans) at the New Hope Missionary Baptist Church in Radcliff, KY setting up a luncheon and assisting on the food serving line. As we get further into the cycle, more and more opportunities will open up for our cadets to get out into the community and assist in any matters needed. Whether it be volunteering, cleaning, serving, or helping move equipment, they are always eager to help in any way they can!

Commandant's Corner

"I am so excited in my new position as the new Commandant and look forward to continuing to watch these cadets grow as young adults. I am looking forward to Easter break, the Cadets have been working very hard and deserve this time to be home with family, as do the Cadre and Staff. Take this time to reflect, recharge, and rekindle your energy because when you come back we are hitting the ground running. Tri-State, Tri-State, Tri-State....Let's bring that 1st place overall trophy home where it belongs!"

CSM J. Sanders



Our cadets participating in several activities!





A Family Day celebration!

Family Day is a special occasion that allows families to bridge the distance and spend an afternoon immersed in fun activities, shared meals, and quality time with their cadet here at the Bluegrass Youth ChalleNGe Academy. One of the highlights of the day is families being able to pin the level rank on any cadet that happens to be promoted during our Family Day celebration. Amidst the joyous atmosphere, families and their cadets engaged in a variety of sports and activities, shared in their cadets favorite foods, and socialized with the families and peers here at the Academy. For many families, the chance to participate in these activities alongside their cadet provided a deeper understanding of their daily experiences and the valuable skills they were developing within the program. For families, this day served as a reminder of the resilience and strength of their cadet, as well as the unwavering bond that united them. We hope to be able to share another Family Day with them towards the end of May!



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Mrs. Reynolds
Instructor



All of our instructors at the Bluegrass Youth ChalleNGe Academy are willing to go above and beyond for the cadets, but Mrs. Reynolds is always willing to go even further. Not only is Mrs. Reynolds a valued instructor for the Bluegrass Youth ChalleNGe Academy, but she also sets up a choir during the fall cycle that will go out to local institutions for Christmas caroling or providing entertainment with renditions of modern songs for those in Assisted Living. Mrs. Reynolds always makes sure that her students are on task when in the classroom, and is often willing to stay later for those who may need a bit more time. We cannot thank Mrs. Reynolds enough for the experience and compassion she brings to the BYCA!

Upcoming Events

March 28 - April 1: Easter Pass

April 24-26: Tri-State Invitational

May 6: Capitol Tour & Black Hawk Ride

May 25: Family Day

June 15: Graduation



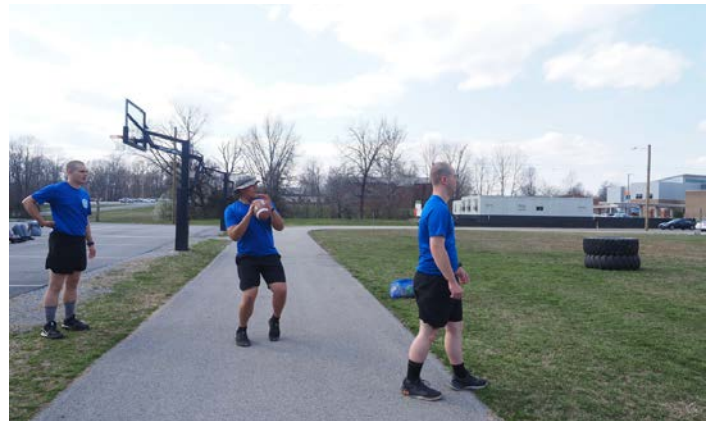


Experiencing a wealth of knowledge

To celebrate the end of Black History Month, our cadets took a trip to the Roots 101: African American Museum in Louisville, KY. Roots 101 stands as a beacon of African American history, art, and culture. As the cadets stepped into the museum, they were greeted by a rich tapestry of exhibits chronicling the journey of African Americans from their ancestral roots to the present day. The museum also highlighted the achievements and contributions of African Americans in various fields such as science, art, music, and literature.

In addition to the Roots 101 museum, the cadets also had the opportunity to visit the General Patton Museum located here on Fort Knox. This museum offered a contrasting yet equally important perspective on history, focusing on the military legacy of General George S. Patton Jr. At the General Patton Museum, students delved into the life and career of one of America's most renowned military leaders. Exhibits showcased Patton's leadership during World War II and his innovative tactics on the battlefield.

By visiting both Roots 101 and the General Patton Museum, students were able to explore different facets of history, from the struggles of marginalized communities to the bravery and sacrifices of those who served in the military. These trips not only broadened their knowledge but also fostered a sense of empathy, understanding, and appreciation for the diverse narratives that shape our world.



Preparing for Tri-State!

The talk of the town for the Academy for the last several weeks has been the Tri-State competition that the Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy will be hosting here on Ft. Knox. In addition to the BYCA, the Michigan Youth Challenge Academy, Hoosier Youth Challenge Academy (Indiana), and the Appalachian Challenge Academy will also be participating in round robin events to determine the overall champion. Many of our cadets have been hard at work, practicing and honing their skills for these events. Cadet Priddy, who is involved in softball, basketball, drill and ceremony, volleyball, and track stated "I've been working in my free time to better myself for all these sports, physically and mentally!" She is one of several cadets that will be participating in multiple events over the three day competition. As all four Academies prepare, they do so with a spirit of camaraderie, sportsmanship, and determination. This competition is not just about winning; it's about showcasing the skills, discipline, and teamwork that define the cadets. As they train rigorously in the weeks leading up to Tri-State, cadets are focused on representing their Academy with pride and integrity. They know that win or lose, the true victory lies in the bonds they form, the lessons they learn, and the growth they experience through the challenges of competition.

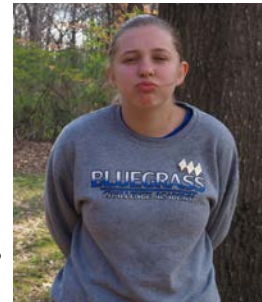


We asked a few of our cadets what they have learned about themselves, what they hope to improve on about themselves, and what they are looking forward to the most here at BCA!

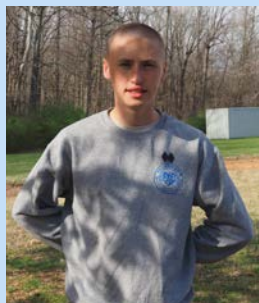


“Since I’ve been at the Academy, I’ve learned that I can do a lot more than I thought I was capable of. I hope to improve my ability to focus and stay on track for longer periods of time. My favorite activity to participate in at BCA is drill and ceremony; I’m really looking forward to performing it at Tri-State. SFC Jenkins has helped me the most at BCA; he has many phrases that have made me really think about myself and who I am as a person.” - Cadet Adams

“So far at the BCA, I have learned that I am worth a lot more than I give myself credit for. I hope to improve on staying true to myself. My favorite activity to participate in is PT because by summer, you won’t catch me lacking; and I’m looking forward to Tri-State. SFC Barton has really helped me stay positive and taught me other ways to cope, such as doing PT and talking things out.” - Cadet Smothers



“I’ve learned about myself that I can do anything I put my mind to. I hope to improve my self-discipline. My favorite activity to participate in is flag football or track; I’m really looking forward to Tri-State and the Black Hawk ride. SFC Patro has helped me the most, he gives me advice about school and the military.” - Cadet Scott

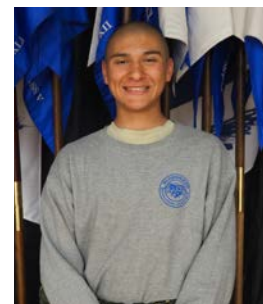


“What I’ve learned about myself is the life lessons cause they will carry on throughout the rest of my life. I’m really looking forward to flag football because I want to play actual football for my future. SFC Jenkins has helped me the most while at BCA with his teachings and life lessons.” - Cadet Hill



“What I’ve learned about myself is that I’m very emotional; and I’d really like to improve on my attitude. The only thing I’m really looking forward to is chess. I have had help from some of the cadets, but SFC Barton has helped me with my emotions and helped me gain structure.” - Cadet Patterson

“I have learned that I can accomplish anything while being at the BCA, and I hope to improve my grades the best I can. My favorite activity to participate in is softball because I’m actually pretty good at it; I’m also really looking forward to Easter pass coming up. SFC Baylis has been there for me to make sure I don’t make any decisions I would otherwise regret.” - Cadet Rostran



“I’ve learned who I am and what I want to be and do when I leave here. I want to improve my academics and athletic abilities while here. I really enjoy flag football and volleyball, though I am really looking forward to the Black Hawk ride. SFC Jenkins and SFC Baylis have helped me the most by being tough on me and being like a mentor, understanding me, and always hearing what I have to say.” - Cadet Marquardt



“I have learned to control my anger and that those who try to change me into something they want is not someone who cares about me. While here, I would like to work on making better decisions. I never played volleyball but I have found it very fun, so I am looking forward to playing it at Tri-State. Drill and Ceremony is not far behind either. MSG Rugg really helped me while she was here; Ms. Mikey and SFC Smith have helped me a lot as well. I don’t know if I would have made it this far without them.” - Cadet McKernon



CENTER-STAGE CADETS



“I’m still learning that even though I’ll have bad days and no matter how many bumps in the road I’ve had, I can’t let that detour me on how far I’ve really come. I’m improving on managing my emotions and healthier ways to cope with my stress to be better for myself and those around me. One of my favorite things honestly is drill and ceremony, if not that, track for sure. I’m also really looking forward to the potential trip to Kart Kountry. There are many that have helped me and I thank and appreciate all of them, SFC Jones, SFC Stivers, SFC Music, SFC Barton, SFC Gay, CSM Sanders, and MSG Mitchell. If it weren’t for them and some others who really didn’t care when I first got here, I don’t know where I’d be at right now. I’m not entirely sure what I plan to do after finishing to program, but I will be ready for the things in my future.”

- Cadet Richardson, 1st Platoon Wolfpack



“I learned that I have a hard time taking direct orders, but I am making progress and that the Academy is helping me make the right choices and leading me down the right path to make that change. I hope to continue down that path and make everyone proud of me and prove the people that said I would never be anything in life wrong. Tri-State is probably the most exciting event that comes to mind but I am also really looking forward to the four day break to show my parents how much I’ve improved. SFC Baylis has helped me the most, he has helped me through the struggling times with his advice. After I graduate the program, I plan to graduate high school and go to college or a trade school to be either an electrician or welder.”

- Cadet Payne, 2nd Platoon Bulldogs

Message from the Deputy Director:

“Many of our cadets are anxious about the upcoming Easter Pass and we hope you continue to encourage them, even while they are home for those few days. Once they return back to the Academy, the work isn’t over, as we still have another two months left in the cycle. Please don’t stop showing the support you’ve provided up to this point, they can make it to the end!”

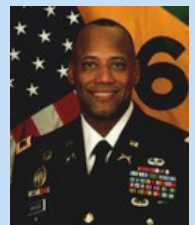


Scott Brown, Deputy Director
Bluegrass Youth Challenge Academy

Message from the Director:

“Parents/Guardians —

Happy Easter!! We are at the halfway point and Class #50 is doing phenomenal. I enjoyed seeing everyone during our first family day, and I look forward to seeing you again at our next family day gathering during the Memorial Day Weekend. You have truly been a blessing to BCA by your words of encouragement on Facebook, and your awesome support to our cadets and staff. Wishing you and your family a wonderful and blessed Easter holiday weekend!”



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

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