



PRESS RELEASE

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Alaska Military Youth Academy to graduate 118 cadets

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – The Alaska Military Youth Academy will celebrate more than 20 years of service to the State of Alaska during the graduation of 118 cadets of Class 2016-1 from its ChalleNGe program Friday, Feb. 26.

The 10 a.m. graduation ceremony will be held in the Tikahtnu Ballroom at the Dena'ina Center in downtown Anchorage. The ceremony will feature Class of 1997-2 graduate Jon Tuttle, E & I field engineer with CH2M Hill, as the keynote speaker, and Gov. Bill Walker will also be in attendance and address the graduates. In addition, video messages from members of the Alaska congressional delegation will be shown.

During their 22-week residential phase at the AMYA ChalleNGe program, the corps of cadets focused on academic excellence, leadership and followership, physical fitness, life coping skills, responsible citizenship, vocational training and service to the community. The current Class of 2016-1 provided more than 6,750 hours of community service; 81 cadets earned their high school credentials; others earned 7.0 transferrable credits each; and overall, this class's grade-level average increased by 1.6 years.

The 118 cadets set to graduate from the Alaska Military Youth Academy will join the 4,665 previous graduates since 1994.

A new pre-apprenticeship program will begin Feb. 29, where 51 cadets will return to the academy and take part in a four-week vocational training course. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, this Title I Youth Program grant is federally funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and passed through the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Its three main focus areas are: construction (including carpentry, electrical, labor, and ironworking and welding), culinary arts and information technology. Cadets will have the opportunity to emerge from the pre-apprenticeship program with hands-on training, certifications and connections to potential entry-level jobs or apprenticeship programs.

In addition, all cadets take part in the yearlong Post-Residential phase where graduates return to their communities to put into practice the life skills principles they received and continue their education (high school, college or vocational schools), enter the workplace, or enter the military. The goal of this phase is for graduates to sustain and build on the gains made during the residential phase while serving as a productive member of society.

The Alaska Military Youth Academy continues to fulfill its mission: "To help intervene in and reclaim the lives of youth and produce program graduates with the values, skills, education and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults."

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Who: Alaska Military Youth Academy
What: Graduation ceremony for 118 cadets
Where: Tikahtnu Ballroom, Dena'ina Center in downtown Anchorage
When: Friday, Feb. 26, 10 a.m.