



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release: 16-022

April 1, 2016

By Staff Sgt. Balinda O'Neal Dresel

Alaska Military Youth Academy cadets complete new vocational program

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RIHCARDSON, Alaska —Thirty-six Alaska Military Youth Academy graduates are heading home with hands-on training and knowledge they'll take with them for future careers after completing the first ever academy's pre-apprenticeship program in March.

The four-week vocational training course is in addition to AMYA's regular 22-week residential ChalleNGe program. Its three main focus areas are: construction, culinary arts and information technology.

"What happens so many times with cadets is that when they come to AMYA it's a life changing event for them, but without moving into a job or have something to sustain that change that they have made in their life, they have a tendency to fall back into the old patterns," said Bob Roses, AMYA director. "The importance of this [program] is to give them a chance to be able to move forward and be able to support themselves and sustain the life changing events taking place at the academy."

Throughout the past month, cadets in construction trade have had the opportunity to complete 40-hour courses in carpentry, electrical, labor, and ironworking and welding. Cadets in the culinary arts trade received their Serv Safe certification and barista training, while the IT cadets learned foundational skills across a variety of devices and operating systems and an opportunity to take the Computing Technology Industry Association A+ certification test.

Academy graduate and Wasilla resident Isaac Snider took part in the IT course and said he chose to complete the pre-apprenticeship program because of the step up it would give him when applying in today's workforce.

"I'm still 17; I turn 18 in August, and this training puts me on top of a long waiting list for certain jobs," Snider said.

Snider, who has his eyes set for a job on the North Slope or with a telecommunications corporation like General Communication Inc., said the program kept him busy, focused and even paid as he continued to develop his abilities after graduation.

AMYA was provided with \$125,000 in federal grant money through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, a Title I Youth Program, which is federally funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and passed through the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

-more-

Roses hopes that the well-trained and ready-to-go cadets will soon be receiving employment offers for potential entry-level jobs or other apprenticeship programs.

While the cadets embark on the starting point of their careers, Snider is eager for the next class of cadets to volunteer for the program.

“I hope the program continues to develop and become better for cadets in the future,” Snider said. “I felt like it was a personal blessing for me to have a chance to do this, and if someone had that opportunity, I would tell them to go at it 100 percent because it’s such a worthwhile thing to do.”

The grant money given to AMYA will also make it possible to extend the pre-apprenticeship program to the next class of graduates who just kicked off their first week of training on Wednesday.

###

PHOTOS

1. **Attached pdf** includes story and photos.
2. **Flickr album** for full resolution and additional photographs.
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/alaskanationalguard/albums/72157666083531720>
3. **DVIDS link** includes story and photos. (DVIDS is generally accessible from all computers)
<http://dvidshub.net/r/78mrud>



160322-Z-CA180-004

Alaska Military Youth Academy graduate and Wasilla resident Isaac Snider learns foundational skills across a variety of information technology devices and operating systems during a four-week vocational pre-apprenticeship training program in March. AMYA graduates 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. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Balinda O’Neal Dresel)



IMG_9712

Alaska Military Youth Academy graduate and Anchorage resident Caitlin Duenas prepares bolts and nuts for placement to secure a girder during the construction trade portion of the pre-apprenticeship program at the Iron Workers Training Center in March. (Photo by Roman Schara, AMYA)



IMG_9035

Cadets in the culinary arts portion of the Alaska Military Youth Academy's pre-apprenticeship program gather around Elda Contreras, an AMYA food service journeyman, as she teaches a course on food displays and presentation plates in March. (Photo by Roman Schara, AMYA)