



ALASKA MILITARY YOUTH ACADEMY

The Alaska Military Youth Academy is part of the National Guard's Youth ChalleNGe program with the mission:

"To help reclaim the lives of at-risk youth and produce program graduates with the values, skills, education and self-discipline to succeed as adults".



Challenges facing Alaska and the country:

- Nationally, 25% of freshman fail to graduate; in Alaska it's higher at about 30%
- Decades of research show that high school dropouts are more likely to commit crimes, abuse drugs and alcohol, have children out of wedlock, earn low wages, be un or underemployed, and suffer poor health than are individuals who successfully complete high school.
- HS dropouts are 72% more likely to be unemployed
- 75% of state prison inmates nationally are former dropouts
- Intervening and getting these young people back on track is essential

Background

- Governor Walter J. Hickel, along with Maj Gen Hugh L. Cox (The Adjutant General, DMVA) signed an agreement on 15 October, 1993, establishing the pilot program for what was then known as the Alaska National Guard Youth Corps.
- The first AMYA Director was Col John C. Fleming
- One of our first staff members was Mr. Mike Masters who retired in 2011. He helped run AMYA's first class in 1994. So we are one of the oldest programs in the country.
- The national ChalleNGe program, of which AMYA is part, grew out of a project by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in the late 1980s and early 90s that sought to develop new approaches for out of school youth. CSIS concluded that many existing models focused on symptomatic behaviors without understanding and addressing the underlying causes.
- In 1991, Lt Gen Conaway (Chief, National Guard Bureau) presented "Vision 2020" which incorporated and formalized a third community role, or mission, for the National Guard, to be active participants in domestic concerns through local, regional and nationwide initiatives and programs.
- The National Guard bureau developed the specific model in use at AMYA and designed it to be an intervention, rather than a remedial program. The program deals with the symptoms and underlying causes in a construct that embraces a "whole person" using our life skills curriculum of 8 core components to give the cadets tools, skills and experience that will help them be successful.
- In 1993, Congress funded a 10-site pilot program, of which Alaska was one.
- Alaska's first class (1994-1) graduated 43 cadets on June 30, 1994. Class 2013-1 will graduate 144 students on 1 March, 2013.
- ChalleNGe is a national organization with 33 programs in 27 states and the territory of Puerto Rico; over 110,000 graduates nationally and about 9,000 annual graduates across the country.

Some graduates

- SSG Zachary Pilcher (Class 1995-1) USMC (Bronze Star Recipient); currently police officer in AK
- US Airways Flight Attendant Kenji Gailey (Class 2002-2) Started small business after graduation, sold it to and now works for Ross Perot, Jr.
- SSG Andrew Mitchell (2001-1) USMC (Formerly assigned to Marine One during the Bush Administration)
- SSG Aaron Lopez, (2004-1) US Army (Bronze Star Recipient)
- Klaus Welch (2006-2) Received A+ certification while at AMYA and started own company; is now contracted to GCI

What do we do:

- The Academy has a quasi-military life learning and academic environment; focused on prevention of bad choices and assisting in good choices
- Anchorage is our biggest city AMYA gets many students locally, but recruits to whole state.
- All students who become candidates/cadets are volunteers
- Residential phase (5 1/2 months); post-residential phase (12 months)

- Eight core components: Academic Excellence, Physical fitness, Job skills (VoTech & safety), Service to the Community, Health and Hygiene, Responsible citizenship, leadership/followership, Life coping skills
- HS Diplomas (accredited with Northwest Accreditation Commission) for those with enough credits, GED, 7 credits for attending toward Diploma, assistance with credit recovery
- Placement assistance after residential phase during post-residential support phase

Mentoring program

- Mentoring; volunteers can apply with RPM section; mentors carefully screened (includes criminal background check) and formal training is provided
- Each applicant needs a mentor
- Requirements: at least 21, same sex, pass police background check, can't be immediate family
- Structure program: Training provided by RPM
- Provide advice and counsel, assist future planning, help assess placement options and strategies

Six Sections: (RPM (recruiting, placement, & mentoring), Medical and Counseling, Cadet Support Services, Cadre, Dining Facility, Academics); 74 staff

- Academic section was noted as best in national program in 2010 and we're better now
- RPM noted this year as one of top six in the country; participated in this year's benchmarking summit
- AMYA invited to participate in Cooperative Agreement rewrite
- Mr. Roman Schara; Cadet Support Services; won Honorable mention in the Governor's Peak Performance awards

Results

- Annual Target: 288 cadets/year (144/class)
- Graduates of Academy to date: 3,796 (as of 2012-2)(2013-1 graduates 144 cadets 1 Mar 2013)
- We in-test with TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) and then test out to know exactly how effective we've been (~1.35 academics years per residential class)
- Can award up to seven (7) credits for those who pass each classes (additional credits may occasionally be awarded depending on individual student background and achievement)

Mathematics: 1.0 credit

Science: 1.0 credit

Social Studies: 1.0 credit

English: 1.0 credit

Physical Fitness: 1.0 credit

Life Coping: 1.0 credit

Integrated Studies (course emphasis, credit recovery, remedial training, testing, & supplemental curriculum)

Wilderness Training: 1/2 credit

Vocational Technical Education: 1/2 credit

Approximate Demographics (varies class to class):

- Gender: Males: 70% ; Females: 30%
- Race: Native Alaskan: 22%; White: 35%; Asian/Pacific Islander: 15%; Black: 14%; Hispanic: 10%; 4% Other
- Age: Sixteen: 32%; Seventeen: 30%; Eighteen: 14%

Website: akmya.org

AMYA is on Facebook

