

SJR

7



REC

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

PLEASE ENTER INTO THE RECORD MY TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE STA
 COMMITTEE ON SJR # 7 COMMITTEE NAME
 DATED 1-28-97
 BILL/SUBJECT

I Jerome Adams have worked with many youth over the past 25+ years trying to keep them and I feel united the inner Developer

In Sept 86 was Brandon and 2 other seen. I know how hard work was accepted and had a person come home great. I am presently a member for my grandson and probably will be for the other boys

There has been a tremendous change in my grandson due to the structured environment and a tremendous love from previous friends with a total love environment and new friends in a great way.

This program has impressed me with its true success greater than anything I've seen.

I would like to see it expanded

I would like to see it expanded so that I could keep more youth. This is cheaper than a failed life and prison cheaper than a failed life plus a jail sentence.

This gives kids a chance to make some personal decisions and the skill to add determination which to that will lead to a successful productive life.

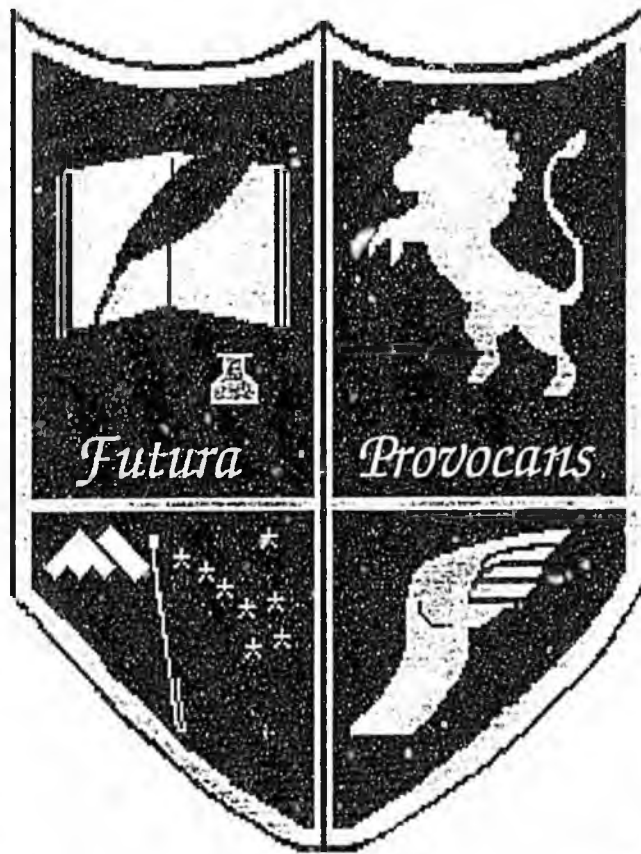
Thank you

SIGNED Jerome Adams SJR 7
 TESTIFIER

Bill
 REPRESENTING (OPTIONAL)

1505 211 Ave #200 Anchorage Alaska 99501
 ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER

Challenging The Future



National

Guard Youth Corps

Alaska

Challenge Program

COSTS OF DROPPING OUT:

- Unemployment rates for high school dropouts are more than twice those for high school graduates.
- Nationally, each year's class of early leavers will, over their lifetime, cost the nation about \$260 billion in lost earnings and foregone taxes.
- The lifetime lost earnings from Alaska's 1991 dropouts is over \$500 million (using national estimates).
- National estimates indicate that dropouts require 35% more social services than high school graduates.
- Over a ten-year period, earnings have decreased 12% for male dropouts and 9% for high school graduates, while college graduates' earnings rose 10%.

— *Alaska's Adolescents: A Plan for the Future*, Alaska Adolescent Health Advisory Committee, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (1995) at 79.

ChalleNGe Program

P.O. Box 5727

Fort Richardson, Alaska 99505

(907) 384-6015/6017 or 800-797-2267 Fax: (907) 384-6007

ChalleNGe Program History

In federal fiscal year 1993, the U.S. Congress enacted legislation establishing and funding 10 pilot programs for 16-18 year-old "at-risk" youth in various states. For the purposes of the pilot projects, "at-risk" was defined as being out of school without having completed a secondary school education.

These projects were designed to follow a model suggested by a 1989 Rockefeller Foundation study which combined a military-style residential setting with a strong community service component in an effort to help these "at-risk" teens get their lives back on track.

In January of 1994, the Alaska National Guard Youth Corps began its first ChalleNGe Program class. Forty-three young men and women graduated from this first class in June of that year. The Alaska National Guard Youth Corps ChalleNGe Program is now in its sixth session and has graduated 275 students.

Program Objectives

This year in Alaska it is projected that more than 3000 high school students will leave school before completing a secondary education. This number does not include those students who are removed from high school programs for disciplinary reasons. Statistics supplied to the ChalleNGe Program from other agencies indicate that 50% of high school dropouts are not able to find employment and that 80% are regular illegal drug users.

The objective of the Alaska National Guard Youth Corps is to turn these young Alaskans, who statistically are headed for a dismal future, into self-confident, contributing citizens of our state and their local communities.

To accomplish this the ChalleNGe Program uses the proven methodology of the United States armed forces. It includes an intense, disciplined, structured, military-style residential phase 22 weeks in duration, followed by a 12 month post-residential "after-care" phase.

Training at the ChalleNGe Program introduces students to healthy life-coping skills, demanding physical conditioning, leadership and teamwork skills development and successes leading to high self-esteem and pride.

Criteria For Admissions

The ChalleNGe Program does not accept all applicants. Those applying for admission to the program must be 16 to 18 years old, not in school, willing to commit to a drug, alcohol and tobacco-free life while in the program, free of legal entanglements and physically and mentally capable of completing the challenging military-style training program. Most importantly, all applicants to the program must have a real desire to help themselves and must be volunteers.

Program Of Studies

The residential portion of the ChalleNGe Program centers on eight "core" components. These include pursuit of educational excellence, basic vocational skills training, life coping skills, responsible citizenship, health, hygiene, nutrition & sex education, community involvement through volunteer service to others, leadership & teamwork skill development and physical fitness.

Location

The ChalleNGe Program residential phase is conducted at the Camp Carroll Training Site on Fort Richardson. Through a cooperative agreement with the US Army, many facilities on Fort Richardson are available for use during ChalleNGe Program training. Students live in upgraded military barracks within Camp Carroll. Medical, meal and supply facilities are also located at the training site.

The post residential portion of the program is directed by a coordinator at Camp Carroll but takes place in the communities in which program graduates reside.

Host Family & Post Residential Efforts

Students in the program who arrive from towns outside the greater Anchorage area are supplied with host families for the duration of their stay at the ChalleNGe Program.

All students are matched with post residential "mentors" as early in the program as possible. These adult volunteer "mentors" are screened and trained prior to the match and then are encouraged to build relationships with their students throughout the residential phase.

Students from outside the greater Anchorage area are linked with local host/mentor families and with mentors from their home towns.

Mentors and graduates are expected to maintain weekly contact. Mentors are there to help the graduates stay on track, overcome problems and sometimes be a non-threatening friendly adult with whom students can share problems and seek advice.

Youth Corps Challenge Program Results

As of this month (September 1996), the Challenge Program has graduated 275 young men and women and returned them to their communities all across Alaska. Statistically, 55 % of program graduates are employed and 30 % are in academic or vocational training. None of the graduates counted in these narrow success categories is currently in trouble with the law. This 85% success rate has held constant since the first Challenge Program class.

Benefits To The State Of Alaska

In addition to the obvious social benefits derived from redirecting young men and women into more productive lives and away from the negative influences which surround many today, the National Guard Youth Corps provides tangible, measurable benefits to the people of the State of Alaska.

Jobs & Economy: As explained earlier, at least 55% of program graduates are now holding down jobs, paying their own way in society. These job holders create other jobs through their productivity and spending.

Crime: About 20% of those accepted into the Challenge Program had been involved with the juvenile justice system. The life-changing experience of the Challenge Program has turned these graduates into contributing members of society. According to Governor Tony Knowles in a speech on the state of Alaska's children, it costs an average of around \$60,000 for a young person to be placed in Alaska's Youth Correctional facilities. It costs between about \$30,000 and \$55,000 a year to keep an adult in prison in Alaska, according to the Office of the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Corrections.

Education: Nearly 80% of Alaska Challenge Program graduates received their General Educational Development (GED) certificates through the Youth Corps. Others have returned to traditional high schools following graduation from the Challenge Program to complete diploma requirements. According to Alaska's Attorney General, 82% of those in prison today have not completed a secondary education (GED or diploma program).

Welfare Reform: The Alaska National Guard Youth Corps offers basic academic, vocational, and life skills training to all who qualify. Teen parents currently receiving AFDC, Medicaid and other support payments may qualify for this training as part of an overall public assistance reform package.

Community Service: More than 50 organizations have received assistance in a wide variety of community service projects performed by the students and staff of the Youth Corps during the first five classes of the Challenge Program. Agencies served by the Youth Corps community service program include The Municipality of Anchorage Department of Parks & Recreation, Municipal Libraries and Port Authority, the American Heart Association, Wolf Song of Alaska, the Anchorage YMCA, the Alaska Council on the Prevention of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Alaskans for a Drug-Free Youth, the Eagle River Bear Paw Festival, and the Fort Richardson Post Chapels. During Challenge Program Class 96-1, more than 5,000 hours of volunteer service to others was performed by the Youth Corps students and staff.

Program Funding And Costs

The cost of operating the ChalleNGe Program during its initial years has ranged between \$3.1 million and \$2.8 million. Funding has been entirely provided by the federal government through the National Guard Bureau to the State of Alaska's Department of Military & Veterans Affairs.

The average cost per graduate, not including a \$2,200 stipend for further education or job placement assistance, is about \$15,300.

Future Program Funding And Costs

According to program managers within the Department of Defense, the federal government has and will provide just enough funding to allow the Alaska National Guard ChalleNGe Program to graduate one class in calendar year 1997. Federal funding for all ChalleNGe Programs is scheduled to run out at the end of July, 1997.

During the 1997 legislative session, the State of Alaska must decide whether to continue Youth Corps funding either in whole or in partnership with the federal government, or to allow the program to close its doors.

This Document Prepared By:
Edward Wicher (SSG),
384-6120/6015 ((Revised: Oct 1996))

What The State Can Do

PROVIDE FUNDING FOR THE OPERATION OF THE
YOUTH CORPS CHALLENGE PROGRAM

PROBLEM: *The National Guard "Youth Corps Challenge Program" has proven itself to be remarkably effective in turning around "at-risk" kids. Federal funding for the program will lapse at the end of this fiscal year. Unless state funding is provided, this very valuable program could be terminated.*

SOLUTION: In 1994, the federal government provided funds to the Alaska National Guard to participate in a pilot project for 16 to 18 year old "at-risk" youth who had dropped out of school. Within the structure of a military-style residential living program, participants undergo an intensive 22-week program to enhance success and personal excellence. The program also provides a 12-month post-residential follow-up. The program is now conducting its sixth class. Federal funding for the program will lapse at the end of July 1997. The state should undertake every effort to ensure that the program continues even after the federal funding stops.

Of the 199 youths who had participated in the program as of January 1996, 145 received their high school diploma and over 30 others returned to high school. With the addition of the members of Class 96-1, the program has now graduated 275 students. Eighty-five percent of all participants have been placed in jobs or are continuing education programs.

The individual success stories are a testament to the effectiveness of the program. Youth who were disenfranchised and adrift, with no life purpose or direction, have realized personal success and have made contributions that benefit everyone in the state. The average cost per participant is about \$17,000. This is a small fraction of what society might spend on these "at-risk" youth if they ended up on welfare or in and out of our mental health and substance abuse treatment programs and jails.

ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH CORPS

ChalleNGe Program

YOUTH CORPS - YOUTH CORRECTIONS **COST COMPARISON**

Many of those accepted into the ChalleNGe Program had been in trouble with law enforcement authorities and, according to Youth Corrections officials, were headed for more trouble and incarceration at one of Alaska's Youth Corrections Facilities.

According to statistics provided by the Division of Family and Youth Services, it costs between \$151.00 per-day and \$381.00 per-day to house a juvenile offender in Alaska. Using these figures it costs between \$55,115 and \$139,065 per year to keep a juvenile offender in one of Alaska's facilities.

The average length of stay for an offender is 13.5 months, for an average cost of \$61,910 per stay.

The average cost for a Youth Corps student is about \$15,000, not including the \$2,200 stipend for graduates.

Eighty-five percent of Youth Corps ChalleNGe Program graduates are successful and not in either the Youth or Adult Corrections' systems.

As of August 9, 1996, the Youth Corps has graduated 275 students.

ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH CORPS
ChalleNGe Program

YOUTH CORPS - ADULT CORRECTIONS
COST COMPARISON

According to the Alaska Department of Corrections, the annual cost of housing a prisoner for one year ranges from a low of \$29,718.30, to a high of \$53,257.15. Using these figures, the average annual cost of housing a prisoner in Alaska is \$38,919.95.

Those accepted as students in the Youth Corps' ChalleNGe Program are statistically destined to become the adult prisoners or welfare recipients of the future. 82% of those in prison today have not completed a high school program.

Using the Youth Corps graduate success rate of 85%, we can estimate that we currently have returned at least 233 graduates (of our 275 total) to society who will not become an adult corrections statistic for at least a year. This equals an annual gross cost avoidance of between \$6,946,652 and \$12,448,858.

At the current level of federal funding, the ChalleNGe Program can be projected to be creating an approximate cost-savings of between \$4.1 million and \$9.7 million, or an average of \$6.9 million annually.

These cost-savings/cost-avoidance figures increase with the graduation of each ChalleNGe Program class.

MISSION STATEMENT
TO USE PROVEN UNITED
STATES MILITARY
METHODOLOGY AND
TECHNIQUES TO
MOTIVATE YOUNG MEN
AND WOMEN TO
BECOME SUCCESSFUL
CITIZENS



VISION STATEMENT

“TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT,
POSITIVE IMPACT UPON THE
FUTURE OF THE ‘AT-RISK’
YOUTH OF ALASKA”

ChalleNGe Program

PRINCIPLES

- ◆ Provide tough, military-based discipline and standards which students are expected to emulate.
- ◆ Provide demanding physical and mental challenges to instill self-discipline and a strong work ethic.
- ◆ Provide a safe, secure, and structured environment.
- ◆ Provide problem solving skills to promote healthy choices throughout life.
- ◆ Provide staff models and mentors who display acceptable behavior and instill basic conservative American morals and values in the lives of students.
- ◆ Provide community service opportunities to help develop the personal value of service to others.



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

SENATOR RANDY PHILLIPS

SENATE DISTRICT L

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Memorandum

TO: Senator Lyda Green, Chair
Senate State Affairs Committee

FROM: Senator Randy Phillips *REP*

DATE: January 21, 1997

RE: Sponsor Statement for: Senate Joint Resolution No. 7
Supporting continued funding of the Alaska National Guard Youth
Corps Challenge Program

I introduced Senate Joint Resolution No. 7 to send a strong message of support for the National Guard Youth Corps ChalleNGe Program to the U. S. Congress. The ChalleNGe Program is a 17.5 month intervention/prevention program for teenagers that are statistically "at risk" to become unemployed welfare recipients and criminals of the future. The program consists of two parts, a 22 week military residential phase at Camp Carroll on Fort Richardson and a 12 month post-residential phase. The ChalleNGe Program has shown strong success with its first four years of operations, 85% of graduates are in school furthering their education and/or working 12 months after graduation from the program.

The ChalleNGe Program has been funded 100% by the federal government since its inception.

Authorized budgets in thousands:

FY 94	\$2,120
FY 95	\$3,120.5
FY 96	\$3,120.5
FY 97	\$3,120.5
FY 98 request	\$3,120.5 federal and \$250.00 state general fund

The funding is scheduled to end on September 30, 1997. The state has budgeted a portion of the cost of continuing this program and I believe that it is important to let Congress know that the program is supported by the Alaska State Legislature.



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

SENATOR RANDY PHILLIPS

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Alaska National Guard Youth Corps Challenge Program

Information Paper

RECEIVED
JAN 28 1997
Ans'd.....

The Need

- 82% of long-term prison inmates do not have a high school diploma or GED
- 80% of dropouts report using drugs regularly
- 88% of female dropouts under age 30 who are heads of households live in poverty
- Dropouts are increasing; in 1992-93 there were 1802, for 1996-97 the number will be over 3000
- Counting dropouts, expelled, and those that attend high school for 4 years but do not graduate, the number will be over 4000 for 1996-97
- Dropouts require 35% more social services than high school graduates or GED holders
- Unemployment rates for high school dropouts are more than twice those for high school graduates or GED holders
- The lifetime lost earnings from Alaska's 1991-92 dropouts is over \$500 million
- For basic skills training
- For alternate sources of secondary education

One Solution (the Youth Corps)

- 17.5 month intervention/prevention program for teenagers that are statistically "at risk" to be unemployed welfare recipients and criminals of the future
 - 22 week military residential phase at Camp Carroll on Fort Richardson
 - 12 month post-residential phase
- Cost is \$17,500 per student (including the post-residential stipend)
- 85% of graduates are in school furthering their education and/or working 12 months after graduation

Benefits to the State

- Juvenile/Adult crime is reduced
- Illegal drug use is reduced
- Social services costs are reduced (welfare reform)
- Adult corrections costs are reduced. Adult prisoners cost between \$30,000 and \$55,000 per year
- Juvenile corrections costs are reduced. Juvenile offenders cost between \$55,000 and \$139,000 per year. The average length of stay for a juvenile offender is 13.5 months, with an average cost of \$62,000 per stay
- Lifetime earnings increase for Alaska's Youth Corps graduates (6 classes) will be over \$91,000,000
- Disenfranchised youth become healthy, productive and contributing citizens of the state and their community

Funding and the Future

- Previous classes were funded entirely by federal grant
- U.S. Department of Defense withdrew 10% of existing FY 97 Youth Program funds on January 13, 1997
- Pilot Status authority and federal funding expire on September 30, 1997