



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Keystone State ChalleNGe Academy for At-Risk Teens Graduates First-Ever Class

18 Graduates on Their Way to a Brighter Future

Annville, PA – Today, 18 cadets enrolled in the first-ever Keystone State ChalleNGe Academy (KSCA) class graduated from the 22-week residential phase of the program on their way to a brighter future.

The KSCA is designed to give challenged teens a second chance at obtaining their basic education, learn leadership, self-discipline, and responsibility while working toward finishing their education and building a better life.

“This is a day of pride, celebration, and achievement said Maj. Gen. Mark Schindler, Pennsylvania’s adjutant general and head of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA). “It is not the end of the road, but only the beginning of a brighter future. We will be eagerly waiting to learn of your successes and how you continue to grow personally, academically, and professionally.”

The cadets will now complete a one-year mentorship phase of the program throughout various communities while they continue their education, join the workforce or enter the military.

The opening of the academy at Fort Indiantown Gap (FTIG) in Lebanon County in July 2022 formally established the National Guard Bureau’s Youth ChalleNGe Program in Pennsylvania. The program is open to 16- to 18-year-old male and female Pennsylvania residents who are failing to progress in high school or may not be on a clear path to graduating. Applicants must be willing to be drug free, free of felony convictions, and voluntarily commit to the program. The program lasts for 17 months, with the first five months consisting of residential training at FTIG followed by one year of mentorship back in the community.

The KSCA is now accepting applications for its second class, slated to begin in January.

For detailed eligibility requirements and to begin the application process, visit our [Eligibility and Admissions](#) webpage. If you prefer to have an application mailed to you or would like to talk with someone about this program, please contact the academy by emailing RA-MVPACHALLENGE@pa.gov, or by calling 717-861-7767 or 717-861-8831.

The KSCA is a joint effort between the DMVA and the National Guard Bureau in consultation with the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE).

Cadets are introduced to the military structure and focus on eight core components: Academic Excellence; Physical Fitness; Leadership/Followership; Responsible Citizenship; Job Skills; Service to the Community; Health and Hygiene; and Life Coping Skills. Graduates often receive

high school credits, credentials, or a GED. There is no tuition cost to attend. Meals, housing, uniforms, and school supplies are provided at no charge.

Since the program's inception in 1993, more than 179,000 young people have completed the ChalleNGe program nationwide. This award-winning program has been recognized as one of the nation's most effective and cost-efficient programs for targeting youth who have dropped out of school or are at the greatest risk for not satisfactorily progressing, are unemployed or under employed.

The National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program currently operates 40 Youth Challenge sites in 31 states and territories. The program is both federally and state funded.

More details about Pennsylvania's KSCA can be found at www.dmva.pa.gov/KeystoneStateChallengeAcademy.

NOTE: Photos and video from this event will be available at www.pacast.com.

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