

MOUNTAINEER CHALLENGE ALUMNI

Fall 2021

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Mountaineer Challenge Academy Welcomes 57th Class



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CADET TO CADRE



Jacob Rubin graduated from the Mountaineer Challenge Academy's first class of 2015 with 136 other cadets.

As a cadet, Mr. Rubin says he was generally well behaved. "I was able to be on Honor Guard during my time at MCA, also I was an assistant platoon Leader. I did manage to get D-Squad for writing notes to another cadet so I got to experience that, which really helped my character development."

After graduation, he felt drawn to help others and give back to the community. He worked in several different areas, including a hospital, a veterinary clinic

and several odd jobs. When MCA South opened in 2020, he found the opportunity he had been looking for. "It which gave me the opportunity to fulfill my desire to help shape young adults and give back to the community exactly as MCA did for me.

When asked how his time at MCA impacted his life, he answered "I was very much the epitome of at-risk youth. I had dropped out of high school, spending most of my time partying with no real goals or plans for my future. After I hit rock bottom and got in trouble with the law, I decided I needed to make a change in my life as I wasn't the person I wanted to be. The character development and educational opportunities at MCA really changed the trajectory of my life and I am thankful for that every day. MCA has given me the chance to have a fresh path to be a successful adult and to contribute positively to our community."



MCA South



MCA South, located in Montgomery, WV, graduated it's first class in March 2021

Paul Perdue, Director of MCA South had this to say regarding the graduating their first class - "The lives of fifty graduates, fifty-eight staff, and the town of Montgomery as a whole were changed upon completion of our first class. Congratulations to all and good luck in continuing your missions of positivity".

Mountaineer Challenge Academy's second class started in April and is currently comprised of 59 cadets who will graduate in September of this year.

THE ROAD to success



Matthew Casteel (Class 1 - 2017)

After graduating from MCA, I had to wait to enlist (I was 16 when I graduated), I was impacted by the cadre at MCA and decided to join the Marine Corps. I have been in the Marines since 2017 and am coming up on my last year of enlistment. After the Marines, I will be starting my life as a civilian contractor.

Zechariah Russell (Class 1 – 2019)

After I graduated I went to college for Medical Assisting and Phlebotomy. I got my degree at 17 and I signed my 8 year Army contract as a 31B (military police). I am currently trying to go active duty and pursue my dream of serving my country and being a police officer. I loved the Challenge Academy. It really set me straight and helped me get to where I am now. It helped me and many more people get their lives straight.



Want to be featured in our next Alumni newsletter? Contact Roxanne Bright (roxanne.l.bright@wv.gov) and let her know what you've been up to since you left MCA. We love to hear how well our graduates are doing!



Our cadets say that the food at MCA is one of their **favorite** things here. Here is one of their favorite recipes, straight from the DFAC!

BBQ Ribs

- 1 rack of ribs
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ cup BBQ sauce

1. Combine the seasoning. Cut the ribs into thirds. Sprinkle the seasonings onto the pork. Place in oven at 300° and cook for about 1.5 hours. Wrap with foil and continue to cook for about 45 minutes or until the ribs are tender.
2. Take ribs out of oven and cover with BBQ sauce and place back into the oven for 5 minutes.



Have you ever considered a career with the Mountaineer Challenge Academy?

MCA North, MCA South and Mountaineer Job Challenge are all hiring.

You can check out the Employment Page on the MCA web page and fill out the WV Military Authority application.

If you have any questions, you can contact HR Belinda Sharp at 304.791.7907



Interested in mentoring future cadets? If you live in West Virginia and are at least 25 years old you could qualify. Contact the RPM Office at the Mountaineer Challenge Academy at 304.791.7387 for more information.