

MOUNTAINEER CHALLENGE ALUMNI

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Mountaineer ChalleNGe Academy Welcomes 59th Class



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CADET TO CADRE

Alaysia Powell graduated from the Mountaineer Challenge Academy's second class of 2014 with 132 other cadets.



As a cadet, Ms. Powell says she wasn't the best. "Honestly, I wasn't the most squared away nor the best cadet. I was hard headed, I talked back if I felt as if something wasn't right, I had d-squad so many times even though I wanted and loved the physical aspect of the program, I wanted to get stronger."

After graduation, she got her very first job at Walmart, until she decided to apply at MCA-South. She started as a Squad Leader in October 2020 and has been promoted to Senior Squad Leader. When asked what brought her back to MCA, she

said "I love helping people so I thought it would be a wonderful chance to giveback in hopes of changing others lives for the better. What would be a better way then working with the youth that will be our future generations."

When asked how her time at MCA impacted her life, she answered "The program was easy and hard at the same time. The physical part was easy but being told what to do on a daily basis was hard. The pressure and discipline of staying on me whenever I did something I wasn't supposed to, the structure and organization of getting into better habits, holding me to the standard, and challenging me no matter what shaped me and have played a huge role in who I am today. I needed all the qualities the program gave me to get me ready for the real world. I will be forever be grateful to have received the opportunity to be a part of such an amazing program!"



MCA South



MCA South, located in Montgomery, WV, graduated it's third class in March 2022.

Among those graduates was a group of cadets who participated in the SCUBA Club. That group of cadets took a trip to Florida, where they were able to become certified scuba divers.



Mountaineer Challenge Academy's fourth class started in April and is currently comprised of 61 cadets who will graduate in September of this year.

THE ROAD to success



Rebecca Spencer (Class 2 - 1999)

I have lived in Clayton, New Mexico for 5 years. I have a 16 year old son. I am a taxi driver in our little town. The company I work for also takes people to doctors appointments out of town. The MCA changed me a lot. Just want to say thanks to everyone there. If could do it over I would.

Taylor (Washington) Delgado (Class 2 - 2013)

The MCA taught me that with hard work and determination, anything is possible. I currently live in South Carolina with my husband and our 2 year old daughter. I have 8 years and counting in the National Guard, I work full time as a pharmacy technician and I'm a part-time college student pursuing a nursing degree. And to think that "I am responsible for my own actions" would still be impacting my life years later.



Cassidy Jones (Class 2 - 2017)

I have been living in Florida for about 2 1/2 years and I love it! I currently am working for my dad for our family business. It is Jones Excavation. I'm a heavy equipment operator. MCA showed me that you can't be a quitter in life. Things are tough sometimes but everything is temporary just like MCA. Waking up at 5am every morning was tough! But walking across that stage getting my diploma proved it was all worth it. MCA showed me how to discipline myself and to work hard for the things I want and I truly do believe that I am where I am today because of the program.

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!

Beef Stroganoff

1 oz oil

3 ½ lbs beef loin or top sirloin

2 ½ tsp kosher salt

2 TBSP pepper

Cut beef into thin strips. Heat oil in skillet on high heat. Season beef and sear in skillet. Make sure not to overcrowd the skillet. Cook about 7 minutes. Set beef aside in large bowl. Discard any excess oil.

2 TBSP butter

1 lbs mushrooms

Add butter to skillet and add mushrooms. Sauté for about 7 minutes and season with salt and pepper. Once cooked, add mushrooms to the beef.

½ c unsalted butter

½ c. chopped onions

2 ½ TBSP tomato paste

5 TBSP flour

1 ½ TBSP beef base

1 qt water

2/3 c sour cream

2 TBSP yellow mustard

2 TBSP lemon juice

2 ½ TBSP parsley

Mix beef base with 1 quart water. In a separate pan, heat up the butter and add the onions, cooking until caramelized. Add the tomato paste and cook, stirring lightly until browned. Whisk in the flour and pour in beef broth. Bring to a full boil. Turn off the heat and whisk in the mustard sour cream and lemon juice. Pour the mixture over the beef and mushrooms and mix well.



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.