

MOUNTAINEER CHALLENGE ALUMNI

Winter 2026

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Mountaineer Challenge Academy Welcomes 66th Class



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CADET TO ASST. COMMANDANT

Nathan Poling graduated from the Mountaineer Challenge Academy with the second class in 1999. He returned to MCA in 2016 as a squad leader, after serving in the United States Marine Corps. He was promoted to a Senior Squad Leader in 2018. Last year, he accepted the position of Assistant Commandant.

When asked how his time at MCA prepared him for his current role, Mr. Poling said “Working at the MCA takes time and experience working class after class to figure out how to deal with youth and mentor them in a positive way. I believe my experience as a cadet and my years in the United States Marine Corps gave me experience and leadership that the youth we have at MCA needs. At the MCA, I have worked with wonderful leadership and they all took part in molding me into the staff member I am.”

The biggest lesson he learned as a cadet? “I learned self-discipline and a sense of worth. I learned that if you put your mind to something you can achieve it. It was hard being a cadet. The staff pushed us past our comfortability with things, which in turn made us grow as individuals. Structure, routine and discipline are the hallmarks of the MCA.”

The biggest lesson he learned as a staff member? “As staff, I learned how to manage staff on a different level, how to talk to people and manage them in a respectful way.”



(1999)



(2016)



(2020)



(2026)

THE ROAD to success

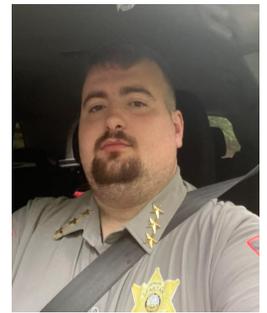


William Clark (Class 2-2015)

Clark is currently working as a union plumber out of UA Local 5. He is assigned to a data center in Ashburn, Va.

Austin Stanley (Class 2-2016)

Stanley is the Deputy Chief/Owner of Spartan Protection, LLC (a security/private investigation company).



Kameron Fleming (Class 2-2021)

After graduating, Fleming went to MJCP for welding and then went to ATDM (Accelerated Training in Defense Manufacturing) for additional training and ended up taking a job in South Carolina in 2024. Fleming now work for Newport News Shipbuilding (they build the ships and subs for the U.S. NAVY) as a Welder 2.

Juanita [McKown] Channell (Class 1-2023)

[McKown] is currently enrolled in the nursing program at Fairmont State University and plans to also pursue a major in psychology. In addition to her academic studies, she works at Ruby Memorial Hospital as a Patient Monitor Technician, where she supports patient care and safety. She also serves as a volunteer firefighter with the Winfield District Volunteer Fire Department.



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!

Baked Pizza Tortellini

- 1 pound ground Italian sausage
- ½ white onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 (18-22 oz) pkg frozen cheese tortellini
- 1 (14-16 oz) jar pizza sauce
- 1 (10.5 oz) can condensed cheddar cheese soup, undiluted
- 1 (3.5 oz) pkg pepperoni, divided
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 (16 oz pkg) pkg shredded mozzarella cheese, divided

1. Preheat oven to 350° and lightly spray a 13x9 baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a large skillet over medium heat, brown the sausage with the onions until it is cooked through and no longer pink. Add the garlic and cook for 2 minutes. Drain the grease.
3. In a large bowl, combine the uncooked tortellini, pizza sauce, cheddar cheese soup, Italian sausage with onions and garlic, about 3/4 of the pepperoni, salt and half of the cheese. Stir to combine.

Pour the mixture in the prepared baking dish and top with the remaining cheese. Add the rest of the pepperoni. You may also add other pizza toppings that you like (olives, mushrooms, green peppers and Canadian bacon all make great toppings)



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

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

Positions include -

Squad Leaders

Dietary Assistants

Residential Advisors

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, please contact HR Belinda Sharp at 304.282.3426