



NATIONAL GUARD Youth ChalleNGe

FACT SHEET

MISSION

The National Guard's Youth ChalleNGe Program intervenes and reclaims the lives of 16- to 18-year-olds who are no longer attending secondary school or working toward a diploma or equivalent. As a free, alternative education program, it offers young people an opportunity to redirect their future. Core components are citizenship, academic excellence (GED/high school diploma), life coping skills, service to community, health and hygiene, job skills training, physical training, and leadership/followership.



PROGRAM GOAL

Through military-based training, the program significantly improves life skills, education, self-discipline and employment potential necessary to succeed as productive citizens. Graduates embrace responsibility, achievement and positive behavior, adding value to the communities in which we serve.

PARTICIPATING STATES/TERRITORIES

Alaska, Arkansas, California, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Program

A structured, disciplined, five-and-a-half-month residential phase is followed by a year-long mentoring relationship with specially trained mentors from each youth's community.

Core Components

- Citizenship
- Academic excellence
- Life coping skills
- Service to community
- Health and hygiene
- Skills training
- Leadership/followership
- Physical training

ELIGIBILITY/SELECTION

Participants must be:

- A volunteer
- 16 to 18 years old
- No longer attending secondary school or working toward diploma or equivalent
- Citizen or legal resident of the U.S.
- Unemployed
- Willing to abstain from illegal use of drugs and substances, alcohol and tobacco during the program
- Not indicted or charged, and free of felony convictions
- Physically and mentally capable of fully participating in the program with reasonable accommodation for physical or other disabilities.

Eligible youth must apply, be nominated by a member of the local community and selected based on state/academy established procedures.

Mentorship

- Meets or exceeds national mentoring standards established by the National Mentoring Partnership.
- These standards encompass mentor recruiting, screening, training, matching, monitoring and support.

Support

- 40 Youth Challenge and 5 Job Challenge Programs, in 31 states and territories, with more than 2,600 employees.
- A comprehensive support package, from appropriate clothing to residential training facilities, is provided to support the program.