



THE GRIZZLY GAZETTE

Fall 2012

The latest from the National Guard Youth Challenge Program

Director's View



With each new state fiscal year, which starts in

July, comes new program goals which help guide the program over the course of the next twelve months. This year, one of our main goals at Grizzly Youth Academy is to help reduce attrition from the start of the residential phase to the end of the residential phase 5 ½ months later.

Nationally, Challenge Programs have an average attrition rate of 31%, which illustrates that nearly a third of the program participants who start the program don't finish it. This represents an unacceptable loss rate and lost opportunities to help change the lives of at-risk students who enroll at the Academy. Using new techniques and best practices from our second Challenge program here in California, Sunburst Youth Academy, Grizzly Academy staff have done an unprecedented job in retaining cadets, starting with Class 29 in July.

Currently 205 Cadets remain enrolled in the program in Week 12, which equates to a 14% attrition rate and a 40% increase in retention from historic attrition rates at the Academy. The staff at Grizzly Youth Academy hope to reduce this even further in future classes, thereby helping make the program more efficient as well producing more Challenge program graduates who possess the necessary skills to succeed in the Post-Residential phase.

One of our other program goals this year is to help increase awareness of the Challenge program throughout the state of California so that the Challenge Program isn't the best kept secret in California for serving 16-18 year old at-risk students. In September, the first annual California Youth Challenge Gala event was held at the historic Biltmore Hotel in downtown Los Angeles. The Youth Challenge Gala was designed to bring increased awareness to the two Challenge programs here in California and to raise funds for both. With over 300 guests in atten-

dance, along with 40 Youth Challenge Cadets from both Grizzly and Sunburst and with business and community leaders from throughout California, the Gala was an overwhelming success. The event was hosted and organized by the National Guard Youth Foundation headquartered in the Washington, DC area with a tremendous amount of help from the Youth and Community Programs Task Force as well as Sunburst and Grizzly Academy staff and boosters. Thanks to everyone who made the event such a success and we look forward to an even better event next year!

John C. Oberg
Major, CSMR
Director
*Dream It,
Believe It,
Achieve It!*



Major Oberg (left) with Matthew Durham (right), a Grizzly graduate from Class 2. For more on the Gala, see A Cadet's Perspective on page 8.

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Are YOU ready to accept the challenge?

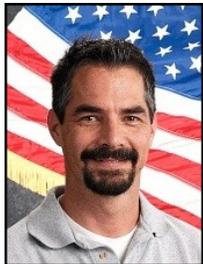
Grizzly Youth Academy is now accepting applications for Class 30, starting January 12, 2012.

If you have the desire to change your life, contact us at 1-800-926-0643.

www.ngycp.org/ca

From the School House

by Paul Piette, Principal, Grizzly Challenge Charter School



Art? Yes!

We believe in providing our students with an enriching curriculum that taps into and develops all of their skills and abilities. The business world greatly values creativity in the workplace. Many of our students have no positive outlet to express themselves. To remedy this, all students attending Grizzly Youth

The art class culminates in a gallery walk, whereby every student selects one piece of art to exhibit in an art show. All students are given the opportunity to walk the gallery, see the pieces made by their fellow students, and, finally, to vote on a particular work of art that they like best. The winner of the art show is awarded several art materials to take home after graduation to further encourage their artistic processes.

Academy are enrolled in a 10 week Fine Arts class.

Art is a very therapeutic tool for our students. Because so many at-risk students have some serious social and emotional challenges to overcome, they need a healthy outlet to express themselves. Many of our students find that tapping into their creativity to explore, construct and express their feelings provides a positive process that allows them a clearer focus on the other aspects of our program.

We provide a rich and varied Fine Arts curriculum at the Academy to develop and encourage artistic talent. Students create self portraits, Day of the Dead sculptures, still life drawings, landscapes using pastels and watercolors, a digital photography project and the creation of a fictitious corporate logo/image. Students are given instruction on how to use the wide variety of materials and mediums to construct their projects and use their individual creativity to express themselves.



Left: An example of a cadet's self-portrait painting.

Below: An example of a cadet's water color painting.



Medical Musings– Spotlight on the SLO Department of Public Health

The mission of the Grizzly Youth Academy's Medical Clinic is to treat cadets' health care needs, including medical diagnosis and treatment, dental assessments, vision care, and mental health evaluations, as well as promoting wellness and healthy living lifestyle choices for cadets. This broad spectrum of services is designed to keep cadets feeling well and physically and mentally able to participate in our rigorous program.

Grizzly Youth Academy is in the unique position to establish partnerships with local community organizations to give the cadets the best experience possible. One such partnership is with the San Luis Obispo Department of Public Health. The Department of Public Health has been working with the Academy for many years and provides vaccines free of charge to the Academy for preventable diseases, such as the nasal spray flu vaccine that the current cadets were recently administered. It also provides the Pertussis/TDAP (Whooping Cough) vaccine to the Academy for administration to cadets to ensure compliance with the new public health law/school requirement

which requires that all students who enroll in a public school have received the vaccination. The Grizzly Youth Academy Medical Clinic (the TMC) and the Department of Public Health work closely together to ensure the health and safety of our cadets through preventative treatment and care.

The TMC also maintains working relationships with several area dentists, Family Medical Center (a local emergency care facility), local Optometrist Dr. Daniel Hile III, as well as Health-Works, a local reproductive healthcare organization. These partnerships allow the cadets to receive the highest quality healthcare in addition to the outstanding services provided by the resident Grizzly medical staff. Currently the Grizzly medical staff consists of two EMT certified Medics as well as a contract Registered Nurse, a Physician's Assistant, and on-call doctor. All the medical providers are excited to provide their services to cadets to ensure their continued success in the program and are an integral part of Team Grizzly!

A Cadet's Day at the Races

by Cadet Ogochukwu Ajayi, 4th Platoon

The weekend of September 24-26 was an amazing few days that I had the opportunity to enjoy. I was one of the eight cadets selected out of the entire academy to travel to Sonoma for the Indy Car Races. It was beyond fantastic, knowing I had been selected from a platoon of 62 girls due to my outstanding performance as a cadet. I believed it would be an incredible trip, and I experienced more than I imagined I would. It was not only a mini vacation from "Grizzly Life," but it allowed me to experience a number of new things. I walked the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, met Indy car racer JR Hildebrand, watched a race (live!), saw some pretty fantastic Indy cars, received a VIP, behind the scenes tour- it was great! Explaining this, no matter how many times I say "awesome", I don't think anyone could ever understand how **awesome** the experience was and how thankful I am to have been blessed with such an opportunity. And the fun didn't stop there.

Everything was great. Cadet Ruiz and I had a room to ourselves, which was wonderful, especially in comparison to the three in one room arrangement the other six male cadets had to deal with. We were able to relax and enjoy TV and movies with sweet caramel corn to snack on. We were able to take long, relaxing showers, which was heaven compared to the 2 ½ minute showers we get at Grizzly. We pigged out at In 'N Out, a pizza place, Chevy's, IHOP, and Burger King- and I'd never been to Burger King before Grizzly! I had a lot of firsts over the race weekend, and each one was positive. I was so interested in the event, and it was nice to converse with the male cadets, since we cannot usually do that on post. I was able to hear from someone with a different outlook on the world- I needed some diversity in communications and I'm sure many of the cadets would agree. Living with the same people for 5 ½ months can be difficult.

Aside from the new experiences and change in company, I noticed something remarkable as we made our way through the crowds at the raceway. I saw people giving me the nod- that nod that says "I respect you." People were telling me "Thank you" and "Good job" and it was such an eye opener. I never would've thought my attendance at GYA would be such a respectable thing, or that I was not only doing it for myself, my family, and my friends, but for the community too. Our cadre often tells us we're doing a wonderful thing here, but I never really understood that. Getting that look of approval and respect made everything seem more real. It was a motivator, an inspiration, a spark of courage I needed to work twice as hard as I have been, and never give up. And to know, that on top of my family and best friend back home, all of those people were wishing me the best is amazing.

The Sonoma voyage was a new, exciting, stress-free, and insightful trip. It granted my fellow cadets and I relaxation, freedom, thought, FUN. I may only be speaking for myself in saying this, but the event shed a new light on my stay at Grizzly. It also brought further proof to the truth that one individual's actions can affect the life of another. I started this program thinking of myself, then my future, my mom and dad, my brother, my little sister, my older sister and cousin. Now I must think of the individuals who surround me every day- the acquaintances I've made over time, the teachers who've given their time to bestow in me more knowledge, the strangers I pass by flashing a friendly smile. All I know is I need to be the change I want to see in the world.

Motivation

by CW2 Salisha Hile, Counselor, 4th Platoon



"Motivation is the key, Sergeant! Dedication is the way, Sergeant!" Many of us have heard this cadence being sung by cadets or soldiers. Upon hearing this cadence, my interest peaked as to the origin of motivation. Are some people just born with it while the rest of us

have to work at finding it? Why do some people become millionaires, movie stars, and doctors while the rest of us are just, well . . . ordinary? There are thousands of studies and hundreds of theories as to why some people are motivated but I won't bore you with all of them. So, I'll sum it up - most people believe that motivation is internal. Not to say that there aren't some external sources that can be used to temporarily motivate a person. This natural internal desire for something is likely to trigger action. If there is success in getting the desired outcome or thing, most people will repeat the process for other outcomes or things.

Okay, so that may be over-simplified because we all know that there must be other factors such as ability, self-esteem, and confidence that also contribute to a person being willing to spring into action. For Grizzly Youth Academy cadets, the cadre are the external force that temporarily motivates them. The counselors, parents, mentors, and mentor department are the ones that help them set realistic achievable goals. The entire staff together help the cadets believe in themselves enough to try and reach these goals. The overall process of being a cadet at Grizzly Youth Academy is an attempt to bring the motivation from being external to being internal. Helping cadets make this change takes special people, who are not millionaires, movie stars, or doctors. Just ordinary people like you and I.

Maybe all of us aren't so ordinary after all . . .

Grizzly Youth Academy wants YOU for the Booster Club!

Interested in getting more involved? The Booster Club is the perfect place for you! Membership in the Boosters is open to anyone who has a passion for getting the word out about the Academy. Boosters help at events such Family Day and Mentor Pass days. They will also serve as support to current parents and families, offering advice and encouragement.

For more information or to join the Boosters, please contact Booster Club President Michelle Meinhold at gyaboostermichelle@gmail.com.

Class 29 Family Day: A Cadet's Perspective

by Cadet Gabriel Salcedo, 1st Platoon

My name is Gabriel Salcedo and this is my Family Day story as a Grizzly cadet. As a cadet in 1st Platoon, I am set to meet the standard at all times and are expected to own up to the expectations of The Rough Riders. When Family Day was coming up, the excitement of all platoon rose, as well as the nervousness, and the cadres and cadets worked together to figure out what kind of Drill and Ceremony we would perform. Days of practice led to our success. At the time, I had been chosen to be platoon guide-on barer for Family Day, which was not a big deal for me, or so I thought. When the day finally came and my platoon was first to perform, our stomachs ached with nervousness, hoping we would do just fine. When we finally got released to the families, everybody was filled with joy, and I rushed to my parents. When the day was finally over, I was filled with sadness for leaving my family, but I knew they were proud of me for getting that far into the program. With burning desires to finish the program, I left my family knowing they will always be there to support me through anything and they are extremely proud of me.

Before Family Day my platoon practiced and practiced to get our routine looking its best. Every day our cadre helped us piece our routine together. Discussions were held to try and add or simply modify our routine. When the big day finally came, we all had mixed emotions. As we marched to the crowd, nervousness took over my body. As I stood in front of every single Grizzly cadet, it finally struck me. My body felt ten times heavier than it usually was. My breath was being forced out of my body fast, inhaling and exhaling. Standing still in front of 1,000 people, I was telling myself, "Relax. Keep calm. Everything will play out just like planned." As we started our routine, my body was fueled by motivation, ready to pull off our commands. When my big move was finally a few seconds away, I took a deep breath and turned around and tossed to flag in the air. As I rushed to the falling flag, it slowly harmonized spinning in the air, twirling to an almost perfect landing in my hands as I began to spin it around and fell back in to synchronization with my platoon.

When our cadre finally released us, everyone went their separate ways. An ocean of streaming people took over, and

I rushed to my parents. My father was the closest to me so he accompanied me towards my family. They were excitedly waiting to see me. When I was five paces from my mother, I saw nothing but tears of happiness and joy set in her eyes. She gave me a massive hug and didn't let go. Then, I saw my sisters and they congratulated me and gave me a hug. My grandmother also had presented herself so she could congratulate me. After we finally settled down, my family brought a grill to cook steak and tri-tip sandwiches. I had a conversation with all my family and told them stories about my experiences at Grizzly. All of my family told me they were proud of me and are happy for the changes I have made. I will never forget what a great day I had with my family.

As the end of Family Day came near and the clock was ten to four, the First Sergeant announced, "All the cadets need to form up in formation. Say your last goodbyes!" All the cadets around started to say goodbye to each of their families. It was a really emotional moment for many people. My parents were talking to me as we said our goodbyes, feeding me words of wisdom. I gave my whole family a hug and said, "Don't forget to write me." My mother handed me a bag of things she brought for me to use for personal hygiene. As I walked away from my family, I began to feel really sad. I formed up and my eyes were watering. I am proud I have such a healthy and wealthy family that loves me. I was so happy I got to see them and spend quality time with them. As we waved goodbye to everyone, parents were dismissed. Then came the smoke sessions. We all got in the push-up position and started pushing. After a few more exercises, I survived.

In conclusion, I had the best Family Day anyone could ask for. Before the Drill and Ceremony, I was extremely nervous, but managed to keep it together and pull off a great routine. My whole platoon did a great job that day. During Family Day, all I heard from my family were compliments. I was rewarded greatly with a delicious feast of my family's coked food. When it was time to say goodbye, I was upset but also happy that my family was here. I thanked them for coming and returned to my platoon. I will never forget my family day and I am sure that everyone has a similar story to tell.

Cadet Salcedo and the 1st Platoon Top Dogs (left) performing their Drill and Ceremony at Family Day.



For more pictures from Family Day and of Class 29, please visit <http://ngycp.org/site/state/ca/> and click on the Shutterfly tab! There you can view and purchase prints.

**Grizzly Youth Academy would like to offer a big THANK YOU to the following
Family Day volunteers:**

AmeriCorps VIP Members:

Antonio Archuleta
Aracely Aceves Lozano
Carly Fox
Derek Sisting*
Erin McNulty
Geneva Licht
Jeanine Lacore
Jessica Hernandez
Kara Barbieri*
Kylie Hensley
Matt Melendrez*
Megan Holbrook*
Nick Larson
Olivia Stankey
Patrick Fina
Shelby Benko

California Conservation Corps.:

Araceli Loayza
Brandon Russell
Carly Britton
Carrie Wheeler
Chris Davis

Cody Brown
Darrell Tolen
Di'minn Robinson
Emily Saeland
Marcos Villalpando
RaNeisha Givins

Grizzly Alumni and Community Support:

Alisha Padilla
Andrew Morey
Brian Samaniego
Brian Walker
Christian Baldiviez
Dora Lemus
Georgina Bonilla
Jack Colick
Jen Miller*
Morgan Weiss*
Rhonda Rocco
Robert Hosey*
Roberto Sanchez
Rosemarie Murcia
Terry Greene*
Valerie Breese

GYA Booster Parents and Families:

Jesse Deringer
Lukus Hinkley
Lynda Deringer
Michelle Meinhold
Toni Hinkley

New Beginnings Church:

Andrew McCormack*
Anthony Martinez*
Anthony Madrigal*
Diane McCormack*
Eileen Ortiz*
Greg Orosco*
Jeremiah Alexander*
Kailie Orosco*
Priscilla McCormack*
Sharayah Martinez*
Sonia Castillo*
Tony Armenta*
Tracy Davis

* Denotes a returning volunteer.

Special thanks to the following donors to Class 29's Family Day:

Boyd & Tina Pierce
Christy Edelman
Gregg Westerbeck & Cynthia Koke
Lynda Deringer
Margaret Piece
Tom & Kathy Sutherland

Anabel Rodriguez
C&N Tractors
Jeff Spnhaltz
Kathleen Kemp
Sandra Ramirez
Sara Marshall

Joel Carreo
Shirley Secrest
Templeton Steel Inc.

**Lastly, Grizzly Youth Academy would like to extend a heartfelt THANK YOU to all the families who
donated items to our Silent Auction!**



Left: AmeriCorps VIP Members Antonio Archuleta and Olivia Stankey working hard to sell 50/50 raffle tickets.



Right: Grizzly Booster Toni Hinkley interacting with family members. The Booster Club is a great way for parents to get involved!

Employee News

The following Grizzly Youth Academy employees have the honor of being voted “Employees of the Quarter” by their fellow staff. They were selected for demonstrating outstanding performance in their positions.

Congratulations to the following “Employees of the Quarter” award winners:



TSgt Kenneth Brown, GYA Medical Supervisor, was selected as the Employee of the Quarter for Jan – Mar 2012. A long-time resident of Santa Barbara County, TSgt Brown was hired in November 2008 after working for the San Luis Obispo Blood Bank

for a number of years. He has been a member of the California Air National since 1996 and is currently assigned to the 146th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron as a Medical Technician and flight crew member. He has deployed numerous times in support of Operation Iraqi/Enduring Freedom since 2001 and is a certified EMT. Congratulations to TSgt Brown for being nominated by his peers and awarded the Employee of the Quarter.



SPC Alfonso Contreras, GYA Squad Leader, was selected as the Employee of the Quarter for Jan – Mar 2012. SPC Contreras was hired in January 2012 after serving on active duty from 2010-11 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. SPC Contreras has been a member

of the California Army National Guard since 2008 and he deployed to Iraq in 2011. An accomplished culinary chef with extensive work experience in the food service industry, SPC Contreras can always be counted on to bring an epicurean dish to staff BBQs and get-togethers. Congratulations to SPC Contreras for being nominated by his peers and awarded the Employee of the Quarter.



SGT Fernando Gonzalez, GYA Squad Leader, was selected as the Employee of the Quarter for Apr – Jun 2012. SGT Gonzalez grew up in Tulare County in Visalia and graduated from Grizzly Youth Academy Class 7 in December 2001. He returned to Tulare

County where he then worked for La Sierra Military Academy for several years, as well as leading outdoor adventure trips into the Sierra's for at-risk students. SGT Gonzalez was hired in August 2005 and is a member of the California State Military Reserve. He takes pride in being both a graduate of Grizzly as well now a member of the Cadre and is an outstanding example of success as a graduate of the program. Congratulations to SGT Gonzalez for being nominated by his peers and awarded the Employee of the Quarter.



SFC Robert Contreras, Logistics NCOIC, was selected as the Employee of the Quarter for Apr – Jun 2012. SFC Contreras grew up in East Los Angeles and was first employed in Youth Programs in 1994 for the Federal Youth Program at CSLO, which

evolved into Angel Gate Academy. With the shutdown of Angel Gate Academy in 2004, SFC Contreras laterally transferred to Grizzly Youth Academy where he has led the Logistics Department for the past eight years. SFC Contreras retired from the California Army National Guard in 2004 after serving for more than 30 years in a variety of positions, including First Sergeant. Congratulations to SFC Contreras for being nominated by his peers and awarded the Employee of the Quarter.

News From the RPM Department

by SFC Danny Castillo, RPM Coordinator



The **Recruiting, Placement and Mentoring Department** has been running full throttle, pedal to the metal, and these last couple of months have been very exciting, pressing and challenging. We have started to implement some new strategies this class. They are the new **Booster Club** with parents of Grizzly Graduates and our new **Internship program** in partnership with Cal

Poly University. Our new **Transition, Acclimation and Commitment (TAC 1 & TAC 2) programs** are designed to better prepare prospective cadets for completing of our 17 ½ month Army National Guard Youth Challenge program.

AmeriCorps VIP Member Jess Hawley officially started in the month of August. She had been providing services to our female cadets prior to applying to our academy through the SARP Center and its Her Power program, and she is continuing her involvement with our female platoon. Jess will also be working on this newsletter, and our **volunteer tutoring program**, in addition to many other opportunities working with volunteers and cadets.

Grizzly Academy Family Day was spearheaded by the RPM Department. Our staff did an awesome job, and our fundraising was record breaking. Special thanks to our new AmeriCorps VIP member, Jess Hawley. She was responsible for rounding up over 60 volunteers. In our Kids' Corner, where the family's kids came over to play and have a great time, was expertly planned and coordinated by SPC Elizabeth Atchison and SGT Tina Scudato. Outstanding job! Our auction was organized by GYA staff members WOC Simone Hosey and SGT Natalie Jardine and our new Booster club members President Michelle Meinhold, Vice President Lynda Deringer, Griselda Ochoa and Toni Hinkley. They all did a wonderful job putting this together. Counselor CWO2 Georganne Weiss and the Counseling Team headed up the GYA T-Shirt Booth. New Beginnings Church volunteers and I assisted in the Food Court, BBQing up Santa Maria style tri-tip and some of the best burgers in town. All our volunteers did an awesome job! Thank you to all the family members and businesses, such as Costco, Coca Cola, and

Albertson's, who gave to this Family Day event. We could not have done it without your help!

Our **Recruitment & Retention** Department has been busy! SGT Jardine has been the person working very hard behind the scenes, making sure all the details in the student and mentor applications are "dress right dress." She has been involved in so many other assigned duties. She excels in everything she does! All our RPM staff have been on the road, recruiting in various counties such as Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Ventura, Kern, Santa Clara, Sacramento and way over in Nevada County. We have been presenting to mainstream high schools, alternative high schools, truancy prevention programs, and youth agencies. We have also developed some new strategies to help our incoming applicants be better prepared for the residential phase, our TAC 1 and TAC 2 programs.

Our staff has been staying on top of **Placement**. This covers our residential and post-residential classes. Our case managers have continued to keep the relentless pace of checking in with mentors and graduates and receiving updates. Each month we have been reporting placement in the high 80s to the mid 90s. Our case managers are assisting the Counseling Department in our residential SMART goals and MAP classes with our on-post cadets.

Our **Mentoring** program has been flourishing. In regards to our current class mentors, we have had the opportunity to train over 225 of the coolest volunteers in California, and one mentor who lives in Colorado. Mentors came to training at Camp San Luis Obispo and in Sacramento. Of course, we also had our Mentee Training for all of our cadets. We have completed our official requirements and have a total of 213 official mentor matches for our current class. We had our first off-campus mentor visit, which went well, and we are planning to have two more off-campus visits for this current class.

Thank you to the RPM staff for your dedication and commitment to excellence!

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!

For the most recent updates and news about Grizzly Youth Academy, go to www.facebook.com/GrizzlyYouthAcademy and stay informed!

Help us reach 1,000 "likes"! Once we reach our goal, we'll be giving out a GYA t-shirt to a lucky follower!

Important Upcoming Dates:

Home Pass #2:
Wednesday, November 21 —
Sunday, November 25

Class 30 application deadline:
Tuesday, December 4

Class 29 Graduation:
Friday, December 14

Class 30 Begins:
Saturday, January 12, 2013

Class 30 Graduation:
Friday, June 14

The Champions Gala – A Cadet’s Perspective

by Cadet Cameron Mason, 3rd Platoon

My name is Cameron Mason, and I am a cadet at Grizzly Youth Academy. On September 30, 2012, I was fortunate enough to attend the Gala to support Grizzly and Sunburst Youth Academy. It was held at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles. The event opened my eyes to so many new things and new opportunities. I felt as if it were a once in a lifetime event. A few cadets and I were chosen to attend this event, to represent Grizzly and show some of the community how much of an impact that Grizzly has had on each of us. There were a lot of very important people there who were strong supporters of the program. There were also many people there who didn’t know much about the academies, but by the end of the night, they too were strong supporters of the program due to the amount of success stories that this program has had. The Gala was held to inform the community, provide facts and information about

the benefits of these academies, and to help create more programs throughout the United States. I was able to sit at a table and speak one on one with people who were eager to learn about my story and the amount of influence that the program has had on my life. The event was such a success and influences many people to help with donations to help both California programs, and to maybe even open a third. The objective was to help even more kids get back on the right track and make a change in the community. While at the Gala, I was fortunate enough to meet Senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana. She as nice enough to speak with me one and one and listen to the changes I have made since attending this program. The opportunity was a blessing and the event was a triumph- I wish I could have the experience all over again.



Cadet Mason with Senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana. Senator Landrieu is a vital supporter of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe programs.



Grizzly and Sunburst Cadets, with cadre, ready to march into the Grand Ballroom.



Grizzly cadets Alondra Jara, Mercedes Medina, Alisa Tanore, and Sienna Torres with SG Sherry Davis pose at the Champions Gala.



Grizzly cadets George Comer, Christian Flores, Cameron Mason, and Justin Morales with SPC Andrew Baldwin at the Champions Gala.

For more pictures from the Champions Gala, please visit the Grizzly Youth Academy Facebook page or the GYA Shutterfly account.

Counseling Corner

by CW2 Georganne Weiss, Lead Counselor



Welcome Counseling readers!

The Cadets at GYA have been working diligently on various Life Coping Skills to help prepare them for graduation of the Residential Phase in just two short months. During the first half of our program, they take classes on Anger Management, Stress Reduction, and Problem Solving and Decision Making. If they feel the need for extra

help, they can sign up for 10 sessions of counseling groups which, in addition to the subjects above, cover the areas of Hospice/Grief Management, Parenting/Family Relationships, Self-Esteem, Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Recovery, and Tobacco Cessation. If one-on-one counseling is their preference, our staff is available Sunday-Friday and on call on Saturday.

A second area we have been working with the cadets on is their MAP or P-RAP, which stand for My Action Plan or Post Residential Action Plan. In other words, what they be doing for the next 12 months after they leave the Residential Phase. We have presentations on various programs such as the California Conservation Corps, AmeriCorps, the military, Job Corps, community college, and Trade Schools. Over both home passes, please take the time to sit down with your cadet and review the MAP- there are probably some blank spaces that you will need to help them fill in. We need to know that you, as their **responsible caregiver**, know and support their MAP (If you don't support what they want, you need to let us know that too). We also ask that you and your cadet go over this with their mentor. You will see on the back page it takes all three signatures to be complete. If your

cadet's mentor is not in town over the weekend, please contact them by phone and then sign that you have gone over it with them and that they are supportive. Thank you for role modeling what you want your cadet to do – your homework!

And speaking of homework, as the cadets spend their time here working on changing their old habits, this provides an opportunity for you, again as their **responsible caregiver**, to educate yourselves on new parenting skills. We could all use a refresher course- as our children grow with this modern world so should we. I'm providing a link to a free newsletter (<http://www.empoweringparents.com>) that I receive with valuable parenting information. This is a great start! However an actual parenting class can be critical for everyone's success. Remember they are only 50% of each situation that they are in with you- you the other half! How are you reacting? Are you modeling what you want them to do? Don't waste a moment more. Go learn how to control your anger, stop smoking those cigarettes, drinking away your problems. GYA really starts for everyone after graduation- welcome to your future!

Lastly, I'd like to give a bunch of hugs and high fives to Mr. Miller and Ms. Villarreal for spending their personal time to start up the GYA Run Club. They have made amazing progress with the cadets- at the end of the October, they will be running their first half marathon! Whoop, whoop! Of course we cannot ignore the extremely generous efforts of Samantha Pruitt, Heather Hellman, and Sheryl Collmer and the organization <http://getoffthecouchpotato.net>, whose mission is to provide opportunities for its participants to kick-start, maintain or challenge themselves to a healthy lifestyle through sports activities, education, community and philanthropy – give to yourself, maintain balance and give back all at the same time.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to work with your children!

Donate to Grizzly Youth Academy



YES, I'D LIKE TO HELP GYA THROUGH THE SAN LUIS OBISPO COMMUNITY FOUNDATION.

I am donating _____\$50 _____\$100 _____\$200 Other \$_____

I am interested in volunteering opportunities at GYA. I would like more information about your program.

Name _____ Phone # _____

Address _____ Email: _____

* Please make checks payable to "Grizzly Youth Academy Fund."

Detach form and mail to: Grizzly Youth Academy
ATTN: Major John Oberg, Director
P.O. Box 3209-3401
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