



**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Alaska National Guard**  
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## **Alaska Military Youth Academy to graduate 180 cadets**

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** — The Alaska Military Youth Academy will celebrate more than 23 years of service to the State of Alaska and a milestone of almost 5,300 graduates during the graduation of 180 cadets of Class 2017-2 from its ChalleNGe program Friday, August 25th.

The 10 a.m. graduation ceremony will be held in the Tikahtnu Ballroom at the Dena'ina Civic and Convention Center in downtown Anchorage. The ceremony will feature Alaska Governor Bill Walker and Former Pro football player and Community Leader Ma'ō Tosi as the keynote speaker. There will be congratulatory and video messages from members of our Alaska congressional delegation.

During their 22-week residential phase at the AMYA ChalleNGe program, the corps of cadets focused on academic excellence, leadership and followership, physical fitness, life coping skills, responsible citizenship, vocational training and service to the community. The current Class of 2017-2 provided more than 12,338 hours of community service; 126 cadets earned their high school credentials; others earned 7.0 transferrable credits each; and overall, this class's grade-level average increased by 1.9 years. All of the cadets completed Radius S.T.E.M. curriculum.

The 180 cadets set to graduate from the Alaska Military Youth Academy will join the 5,112 previous graduates since 1994.

The pre-apprenticeship program engaged 72 cadets in multi-faceted vocational training courses. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, this Title I Youth Program grant is federally funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and passed through the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The main focus areas were - construction (including carpentry, electrical, labor, and ironworking and welding), culinary arts and health care services. Separately, the AK Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management within DMVA provided Community Emergency Responder Training to 93 cadets who will be a resource to their local Emergency Response Teams should the need arise. Cadets will have the opportunity to emerge from the pre-apprenticeship program with hands-on training, certifications and connections to potential entry-level jobs or apprenticeship programs.

In addition, all cadets take part in the yearlong Post-Residential phase where graduates return to their communities to put into practice the life skills principles they received and continue their education (high school, college or vocational schools), enter the workplace, or enter the military. The goal of this

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phase is for graduates to sustain and build on the gains made during the residential phase while serving as a productive member of society.

The Alaska Military Youth Academy continues to fulfill its mission: "To help intervene in and reclaim the lives of youth and produce program graduates with the values, skills, education and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults."

**Who:** Alaska Military Youth Academy

**What:** Graduation ceremony for 180 cadets

**Where:** Tikahtnu Ballroom, Dena'ina Center in downtown Anchorage

**When:** Friday, Aug. 25, 10 a.m.

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