

IN THE NEWS

Citadel sponsor program offers cadets needed rest

By Lt. Col. Ed Memi
437 AW Public Affairs

It's about the toughest experience you can expect anyone to undergo at college, but more than 680 people are going to try this fall when The Citadel welcomes in their largest freshman class in recent years and begins a difficult journey toward their degrees.

To help this large class cope, the Citadel's Cadet Activities Office is looking for families to sponsor cadets in their home a few weekends throughout the school year to give the cadets a welcome relief from the challenging "boot camp" style fourth class system.

The cadets, often separated from their families for the first time, are faced with a regimented lifestyle that affords them very little free time and even fewer luxuries and privileges under the stringent military system, similar to what many airmen faced at basic training. Under the "tough" fourth-class system, freshman cadets are referred to as "knobs," which

refers to their shaven heads that resemble a doorknob.

The program is designed to give out-of-state cadets a "home away from home" since they lack the support structure of their family nearby. Sponsors are matched up with cadets from similar geographic areas or interests/hobbies.

"What most freshman cadets want is just a place to relax, have a stress free meal and someone to listen/talk with them," advises a pamphlet provided to sponsors. Many freshmen might even use the time to get some sleep and do their laundry while at your home, according to school officials.

The first opportunity for cadets to leave the campus and spend time with their sponsor family will be Sept. 2.

The Citadel asked the Air Force for help because they do not have enough sponsor families to accommodate the unusually large freshman class.

"I'm out of sponsor families already and we still have about 50 out-of-state freshman who want to be matched

with a sponsor family," said Mary Ann Dorton, deputy director of Cadet Activities at The Citadel.

The Citadel has extended the deadline for sponsor families to sign up for the program.

About 130 cadets dropped out from last's year incoming freshman class and school officials count on the sponsor program to make life better for those cadets who choose to tough it out.

The school has set times and days, usually on weekends, when freshman can spend some time with their sponsor family. Overnight stays do not occur since most cadets must spend their nights on campus during the first semester.

The freshman start arriving in late August where they are met by the upperclassmen who arrange for intense physical conditioning and military training.

"Military members can identify with what many of these cadets are going through as they have been through similar experiences at the Air Force Academy or



courtesy photo

Citadel freshman, called "knobs", receive intense military training upon their arrival on campus. Cadets have to study a book about the schools traditions and customs since they are often quizzed by upperclassmen on that knowledge.

other military colleges," said Dorton. "It can also be very rewarding to be involved with younger people. It can also be flattering that these young kids will enjoy your company."

The sponsor program also offers a great opportunity to interest them in joining the Air Force.

"Oftentimes, our cadets think that life in the barracks is similar to what life

would be in the military," said Col. Frank Shealy, Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps detachment 765 commander at The Citadel. "We like our cadets to see first hand that the Air Force truly is a great way of life."

Families interested in sponsoring a cadet need to complete a form that identifies their hobbies and interests. To enroll in the program, call Dorton at 953-5111.

Chief

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otherwise."

When someone becomes a senior NCO and decides to make the Air Force a career, Parish said it's important for them to remember where they came from.

"If you were abused by your supervisor and didn't like it," he said, "why would your troops like it. I'm not sure

it makes you a better NCO."

Parish said that the environment an airman works in plays a major factor in his or her decision to reenlist.

"I don't believe a majority of people are leaving for money," he said. "Why did I stay? I stayed because I enjoyed what I did and who I worked with."

Parish said supervisors should try and go back to a more personal environment and get away from the corporate way of doing things.

"You can have fun with what you do and still be professional."

Master Sgt. Josephine Miller, 437th Civil Engineering Squadron, said she liked Chief Parish's straight forwardness.

"I agree with him that we need to do away with political correctness just for the sake of being politically correct," she said. "As supervisors and as people, we need to start thinking outside the box."



Retired CMSAF Sam Parish greets Charleston enlisted members onboard a C-17 during his recent visit. The Chief spoke about current enlisted issues.

Recruit

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said. "We looked at our problems, made some changes and did some tweaking, so we feel very good about the next year."

Col. Duane Deal, Air Force Recruiting Service commander said there isn't room to get complacent though.

"We really don't yet have the time to stop and celebrate," said Deal.

"This is an indicator of how hard our recruiters are working, but we still have a daunting challenge ahead of us."

Recruits cite the opportunity to further their education as the top reason for joining the Air Force, according to a recent survey. All new recruits are automatically enrolled in the Community College of the Air Force; the only accredited junior college among the armed services. (AFPN)

Use GI Mail 2000 when deployed

Air Mobility Command offers GI Mail 2000 for command members who are deployed to forward locations and using government network access.

According to AMC officials, members should use GI Mail 2000 instead of commercial internet mail systems such as Hotmail and Yahoo Mail. Commercial services should only be used through a commercial service provider because they do not protect sensitive government e-mail traffic. Also, commercial service's extensive advertising negatively affects bandwidth, which limits the ability to communicate.

Access to commercial internet mail service is restricted or blocked in many Areas of Responsibility outside of AMC to reduce network vulnerabilities.

"The Network Operations and Security Center at AMC continues to improve GI Mail 2000," said Capt. Tim Stacey, an official with the NOS Center. "One of the latest improvements allows people access to their GI Mail 2000 account from any commercial network, as well military networks. We are committed to providing a morale e-mail service that meets the needs of our worldwide customers and does not open up network vulnerabilities."

For more information, call Stacey at DSN 576-7222 or e-mail at timothy.stacey@scott.af.mil. (Compiled by Staff Sgt. Michael Duhe)