



Michigan Job Challenge Program Fort Custer, Battle Creek, MI



Who We Are

The Michigan Youth Challenge Academy (MYCA) is a free, voluntary 22-week residential co-ed program serving high school dropouts who want to make a positive change in their lives. Through formal education delivered by certified teachers and development of life skills in a quasi-military structures, the program puts young people back on the path of success. During their time in the program, participants have the opportunity to earn a GED, Diploma and up to 19 college credits from Kellogg Community College (KCC). MYCA is paid for by the U.S. Department of Defense and the State of Michigan.

The Nature of this Opportunity

The U.S. Department of Labor (DoL) is funding a 3-year, \$4M pilot program for three Challenge states, Michigan, South Carolina and Georgia. Only Youth Challenge Graduates can apply for acceptance into the Job Challenge which provides education and job training to improve employability. This elective program entails up to an additional five month residential intervention at Fort Custer (Battle Creek, MI) focused on development of vocational skills through classroom instruction and experiential learning in the real-world workplace. There will be collaboration between the Michigan Job Challenge Program (MJCP), area businesses, and businesses all over Michigan to develop and implement activities such as internships, apprenticeships, education in many career pathways, participation in job shadowing, and job placement. Twelve KCC direct college credits are available to program graduates.

Benefits to Partner Organizations

There are several advantages to Michigan businesses participating in the project:

- Create a pipeline of disciplined and motivated young workers
- Provide access to an applicant pool already oriented and trained in the work to be done
- Support fulfillment of corporate social responsibility by supporting disadvantaged youth
- Enhance organizational diversity by expanding the applicant pool beyond local residents

The Role of Partner Organizations

Corporate partners will provide the setting for work-based learning and exposure to the world of work. Employment activities include: orientation and instruction on the career pathways available in the organization; opportunities for job shadowing; apprenticeships and/or occupational mentoring relationships; participation in training courses offered in the company; immersion in the culture and professional practices of the corporation; and, in many cases, job placement.

Pathways

1. IT (Networking and Cyber Defense)
2. Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
3. Medical First Responder
4. Kellogg Advanced Manufacturing Assembly Program (KAMA)
5. Trades
 - a. Pipe-Fitters
 - b. Electricians
 - c. Welding
 - d. Machining Technology

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White Paper: Michigan Youth ChalleNGe Academy (Executive Summary)

Since 1999 the **Michigan Youth ChalleNGe Academy (MYCA)** has graduated over 3,500 Cadets. The 17-month program (five month residential) is designed to intervene and assist 16-18 year old high school dropouts in reclaiming their lives. The program is free to applicants, has an educational and life skills component, is administered by the Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (Michigan National Guard) and funded through a Federal (75%) / State (25%) cost share program. The MYCA is located at the VA Medical Center in Battle Creek, Michigan, and leads, trains, and mentors at-risk youth so they may become productive, employed, and law-abiding citizens. This program has been recognized as one of the state's most effective for targeting youth who are at the greatest risk for delinquency, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and criminal involvement.

Program Information

- Phase one of the MYCA consists of a five month residential program in a quasi-military environment focusing on eight core components that includes: Academic Excellence (seven Marshall High School & 19 Kellogg Community College credits), Life Coping Skills, Job Skills, Health and Hygiene, Responsible Citizenship, Service to the Community, Leadership, and Physical Fitness.
- Phase two of the MYCA consists of a Post-Residential mentoring program that tracks graduates as they utilize newly learned life skills, academic excellence, vocational skills, community service awareness, and employment preparedness. Graduates are required to seek placement or completion of one of the following during the 12-month phase:
 - Return to community high school for diploma completion
 - Credit recovery for awarding of high school diploma
 - GED completion
 - Enrollment in two or four-year degree producing college/university
 - Enrollment in vocational tech / trades licensing program
 - Small business development (entrepreneurial)
 - Employment
 - Military induction
 - Acceptance to the Michigan Job ChalleNGe Program
- According to a 2012 MDRC Youth Challenge study: 59% of Challenge graduates earned a GED or high school diploma, 45% joined the workforce, 41% continued their education, and 7% joined the military.
- The National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program is recognized by the National Governors' Association, State Legislatures, and the National Guard Association of the United States; all of which have acknowledged the youth challenge programs nationally with legislative resolutions supporting their efforts.