

FOURTH CLASS CADET SPONSOR PROGRAM

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I. About the Program...

A. *What is the purpose of the Sponsor Program?*

During the first year at the Academy, the Fourth Class cadets experience a drastic transition from a civilian to a military way of life. They are immediately subjected to the high standards and rigorous discipline program that is unique to the Academy. Some cadets adjust well, while others have a more difficult time. Many experience moments of depression, loneliness, homesickness (especially those away from home for the first time), or doubt. The Sponsor Program provides cadets with families who can help provide support, friendship, and learning beyond the Academy environment. The Program is structured to provide cadets a home away from home environment, exposure to the local area and when possible, to the unique military environment. This helps make the cadets' integration into the military community an easier and more effective process. Families can provide a unique and relaxed learning environment that the Academy cannot provide.

B. *Do I need to know Academy policies/regulations?*

Yes. Fourth-class cadets have many demands on their time and are very restricted during their first year at the Academy. These restrictions are fundamental to the development of their discipline. As a sponsor, part of your responsibility is to reinforce and support the Academy training period that your cadet receives. While your cadet(s) are visiting your home, they are still subject to the Academy regulations and disciplinary system. In the past, some situations have arisen that have caused problems for the cadets and their sponsor families. The most common situations are listed below along with helpful hints to help you avoid them:

- 1 - **ALCOHOL:** The Coast Guard Academy's policy is simple: Cadets are not allowed to consume any alcohol unless they are at least 21 years of age. It is imperative that sponsors support the cadet-training program and Connecticut State law, which prohibits the consumption of intoxicating beverages in a private residence other than with the minor's parents or legal guardians. In addition, there are some very specific rules in the Cadet Regulations for cadets who are 21 years of age. First, any cadet who introduces alcohol, causes alcohol to be introduced, possesses containers with alcohol residue, or consumes alcohol on the Academy or any other military installation at unauthorized times or locations will be disenrolled. Second, any cadet of any age who introduces or consumes alcohol in the cadet barracks will be disenrolled. Third, first class cadets who are at least 21 years of age may consume alcohol at the Dry Dock restaurant during liberty hours providing they are not restricted. Fourth, alcohol shall not be consumed in

a public place where such consumption would offend the general public. Fifth, cadets in uniform shall not visit a bar or taproom whose primary purpose is to serve liquor or other alcoholic beverages. Lastly, cadets who are 21 years of age shall not provide alcohol to underage cadets or condone any underage drinking. Legally they are allowed to drink, but the Academy expects them to act responsibly. Always provide and encourage non-alcoholic alternatives.

- 2 - **IMPROPER RELATIONSHIPS (FRATERNIZATION):** Social relationships of Academy grounds are permitted between members of adjacent classes except for the fourth class. Fourth Class cadet associations with any member of the three upper classes shall be strictly professional. In addition, third class cadets must maintain a professional relationship with First class cadets at all times. Dating is permitted between members of adjacent classes except Fourth Class cadets may only date classmates. Sponsors should keep these policies in mind when planning or scheduling activities, particularly if the sponsor entertains members of different classes.
- 3 - **USE OF AUTOMOBILES:** All cadets may drive automobiles providing they have a valid driver's license and comply with the motor vehicle laws of the state or country in which the automobile is operated. Underclass cadets are prohibited from owning or maintaining an automobile, unless it's at their parents or legal guardian's actual home residence. Cadets may not own and store a car at your home for any reason. All cadets may rent an automobile with the approval of their Company Officer, however they may not own or operate any motorcycles, trail bikes, mopeds, motor scooters, terrain vehicles or other two-wheeled motorized vehicles. It is your prerogative whether or not your cadet may use your vehicle(s). It is not expected and should be considered a privilege.

The CGA does provide transportation to and from the Hartford and Providence airports for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring Break leave. This transportation information is provided to the cadets will in advance so they can plan their travel arrangements around the available transportation schedule. Sponsor Families are also given this information during the year via the Sponsor Family Program.

- 4 - **CIVILIAN CLOTHES:** Fourth Class cadets are not authorized to wear civilian clothes within a 100-mile radius of the Academy. During their Third Class year, regulations are modified to include specific, Academy accepted attire. Cadets are allowed to wear civilian clothes while in your home, however, they must wear their uniforms once they leave your home for any reason (i.e. running an errand, returning to the Academy, going shopping, etc.).
- 5 - **LAUNDRY:** Adequate laundry facilities are provided for the cadets. Cadets should not be encouraged to bring their laundry to your homes. You should not do their laundry for them.

- 6 - TELEPHONE CALLS: Most cadets have cell phones. To contact cadets who do not have cell phones, call the Cadet Watch Office at 444-8294 and ask to be connected to the cadet's company dayroom area. Cadets may receive and make calls throughout the day. However, they are not allowed to use them during their class periods and prefer minimal use after 8:00 PM weekdays as that is their study period. If you allow cadets to use your phones, they should be expected to pay for all long distance calls.

C. *What are the qualifications to become a sponsor family?*

Sponsors must be at least 28 years old and live within 25 miles of the Coast Guard Academy in order to be considered (exceptions will be considered on a case by case basis). Active duty military must have a rank/rate of E-7 or O-3 and above.

Following Coast Guard Academy policy, all adults who volunteer to mentor, teach, coach or sponsor cadets, whether on or off Coast Guard Academy grounds, may be asked to provide additional information (name, birth date and social security number) needed to conduct a background check. In order that we may conduct these background checks, you may be asked to provide the name, birth date and social security number for every person over the age of 21 residing in your home. This includes your spouse, adult children, and/or relatives living in your home.

D. *Do problems arise in the sponsor/cadet relations?*

Rarely. Cadets are usually ladies and gentlemen and are expected to be on their best behavior and not place any unreasonable demands upon you or your family. Common courtesy and proper etiquette are one of the major elements in cadet training. To help facilitate better relations and prevent misunderstandings or uneasiness, inform your cadet of your rules and ensure that these rules are enforced. You should not tolerate any behavior you would not tolerate from your own family members. Do not be afraid to correct your cadet with regard to house rules. Also ensure proper respect is given and don't be afraid to inform them if it is not. If a problem arises with a cadet, please contact the Academy's Sponsor Family Program Coordinator Carey McNeil at 860-444-8281. Please be explicit with regard to the problem.

E. *What activities should I anticipate participating in with my cadet?*

Cadets will sometimes invite their sponsor to the Academy sporting and social events. Sponsors are encouraged but not required to attend any of these events. Sponsors are also not required to entertain their cadets or take them out to dinner or family events unless they choose to do so. Cadets should not expect or assume too much from their sponsor family since it is not a replacement for their own family.

F. What should I do if my cadet becomes sick or injured while visiting my home?

If the illness or injury is life threatening, call 911 or take the Cadet to a civilian hospital to get them the appropriate medical attention as soon as possible. If the illness or injury is not life threatening, or if questions arise as to what is the appropriate procedure, contact the Academy Clinic (there is a Watchstander there 24/7). The Clinic can triage over the phone to give guidance as to whether or not they can provide services. The Clinic can be reached by calling: 860-444-8402. The Cadet may be directed to report to the Clinic or given other instructions regarding a time and place for further care.

II. About Cadets...

A. How do they become cadets?

Prospective candidates apply to the Academy for consideration. There are no congressional appointments. All applicants, civilians, or members of the Armed Forces participate on an equal basis. Appointments are offered solely on a nationwide competition based on:

- 1 - Performance on standardized tests (SAT or ACT scores).
- 2 - High school class standing.
- 3 - Leadership potential.
- 4 - High School and/or post secondary school scholastic performance.
- 5 - Activities (community affairs, employment, athletics).
- 6 - Passing a medical and physical examination.
- 7 - Fulfillment of basic eligibility requirements of age, citizenship, character, scholastic and marital status.

B. How many cadets are there?

Each summer, the Academy accepts approximately 290 to 310 young men and women. During the academic year, the average corps size is from 950 - 1000 cadets. The corps is in the military ordinance of a regiment. The regiment is then broken down eight companies. These companies include three departments, and each department is made up of divisions. Cadets of all classes are berthed in the same area, although the specific roommates are divided by year (class) and gender.

C. What do the cadets do at the Academy?

To ensure that all cadets are prepared to assume the responsibilities and duties of commissioned Coast Guard officers upon graduation, the Academy trains cadets in all aspects of military life. Therefore, the Academy environment includes academies military training, athletics and various extracurricular activities.

- 1 - **ACADEMICS:** The academic year begins late August and ends mid- to late May. Cadets have a choice of eight majors: Government, Civil Engineering, Management, Electrical Engineering, Marine Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Marine Science and Operations Research. Once cadets choose their major, they are assigned an academic advisor in their major interest area.

Cadets are required to take twenty core courses in a wide variety of subjects in addition to those required by the major. Most of these are in technical subjects such as computer science, basic naval architecture, and physics. They are also required to take career-related courses such as celestial and coastal navigation. The typical course load of each cadet is about 20 credit hours per semester. There are two semesters per year. Each semester last approximately 16 weeks.

Classes at the Academy are varied in methods of instruction as well as size. The average class consists of 18-22 in core courses and as small as 10-12 in major courses. The normal periods last from 50 to 75 minutes, with labs lasting about 2-3 hours. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, there are seven 50-minute periods, four in the morning and three in the afternoon. The remainder of the day is used for military training, drill and exam periods. Tuesdays and Thursdays are used primarily for testing and laboratory.

Counseling, individual assistance and extra instruction are available. Cadets are highly encouraged to use these resources, especially when they are experiencing academic difficulty.

- 2 - **MILITARY:** Our military training is what distinguishes the Coast Guard Academy from other institutions of higher learning in the United States. Our goal is to prepare young people to serve as commissioned officers in the Coast Guard. To accomplish this we indoctrinate the cadets into the military system by teaching them basic fundamentals during “Swab Summer”. The military training is further enhanced with instruction in drill, leadership, CG history, watch standing, CG missions, etc. Most of the training for upper-class cadets is conducted during the summer when they embark on CG cutters and attend various CG training facilities around the country. During the academic year, military training of a practical nature is conducted daily as the cadets, primarily 1/c cadets, run the regiment. Planning, logistics, administration and leadership are all exercised as the Corps of Cadets functions on a day-to-day basis.

- 3 - **ATHLETICS:** Physical strength, endurance, agility and competitive spirit are just as important to the Academy experience as academics and military development. All cadets are required to undergo physical training through their physical education classes in addition to participation in either an intercollegiate or an intramural sport.

Intercollegiate Teams include:

- a. Men’s Sports: Baseball, Basketball, Football, Soccer, Tennis, and Wrestling.
- b. Women’s Sports: Basketball, Softball, Soccer, and Volleyball.

c. Co-ed: Crew, Cross Country, Pistol, Rifle, Indoor/Outdoor Track, Sailing and Swimming.

In addition, numerous club programs are available, such as Men's Lacrosse, Women's Lacrosse, Men's Hockey, Men's Rugby, Women's Rugby, Men's Volleyball, and coed: Bowling, Golf, Marathon/Triathlon, Martial Arts, Spirit Team, Ultimate Frisbee, Water Polo.

4 - EXTRACURRICULAR: Additional experiences are gained through participation in programs such as Cadet Musical Activities, Community Projects, Big Brothers & Big Sisters Program, Scoutmaster Council, Cadet Trick Drill Team, Genesis Club, International Club, Political Affairs Association, Aviation Club, Dance Club, Ski/ Snowboarding Club, Officer Christian Fellowship, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Tide Rips (yearbook), as well as many Professional Clubs (SNAME, ASCE, IEEE).

D. What does the insignia mean on the cadet uniforms?

The shoulder boards that the cadets wear denote their "rank". Boards with only a shield are worn by the fourth class (first year) cadets. Third class (second year) cadets wear one diagonal gold stripe. Second class (third year) cadets wear two diagonal gold stripes. First class (fourth year) cadets wear One to five straight gold stripes. The number of gold stripes worn by first class cadets denotes the leadership position the first class cadets are currently holding (the more gold stripes, the higher the position). Also, the cadets wear different colored collar devices depending on their rank: First class, blue; second-class, white; third class, red; fourth class, green. The first class cadets, who are also in leadership positions, will wear one colored collar device on the left collar, and gold bars on the right collar denoting the leadership position (the more gold bars, the higher the rank).

The other most common feature found on the shirt lapel of cadet uniforms are gold, silver, blue, and bronze stars. The gold star is awarded to cadets on the Dean's List for performing well academically. The Silver Star means that the cadet is on the Commandant of Cadet's List for performing well militarily. The bronze star denotes the Regimental Commander's List and indicates that the cadet has improved their term grade point average by at least 0.5. Blue stars are awarded for excellence in the Physical Fitness test. Cadets who wear both gold and silver stars are on the Superintendent's List for performing well academically and military. Cadets who earn the gold, silver, and blue stars are place on the Board of Trustees List. Gold Aiguillettes (gold braids) are worn on the shoulder of cadets who are on duty.

E. How does the Honor Concept work?

“WHO LIVES HERE REVERES HONOR, HONORS DUTY.” These words form the foundation of the honor concept instilled in all cadets. This concept is a fundamental value system to which the cadets must adhere to at all times. It is taught to each cadet the minute they enter the Academy. Cadets are taught not to lie, steal, cheat, or attempt to deceive. Violations of the honor concept will result in disciplinary action or even disenrollment. The honor concept teaches cadets the importance of responsibility, trust, and integrity.

F. *Why is the Academy program so rigorous and demanding?*

“The mission of the United States Coast Academy is to graduate young men and women with sound bodies, stout hearts, and alert minds with a liking for the sea and its lore and with that high sense of honor, loyalty, and obedience which goes with trained initiative and leadership; well grounded in seamanship, the sciences, and the amenities, and strong in the resolve to be worthy of the traditions of commissioned officers in the United States Coast Guard in the service to their country and humanity.” If you ask any past or present cadet, they can repeat the mission without a pause. It summarizes the entire Academy program.

In order to fulfill this mission, cadets need to learn self-control, discipline, and respect for authority necessary in the military community. The rigorous program creates an environment that continually challenges and tests cadets in these areas each day. Cadets learn to deal with stress and pressure to prepare them to make sound decisions as officers in the Coast Guard.

III. *Cadet Schedules/Activities*

A. *How do I find out what activities are happening at the Academy?*

There are many ways to get information about the Academy events. The best information source is your cadet(s). They will have the latest information on the events, particularly those that include them. If they don't know, they can easily find the information for you. As always, the USCGA web site www.cga.edu is a great source of on-line information

B. *How do I contact my cadet?*

Every cadet has an email address and nearly every cadet has a cell phone. Cell phone and email addresses are the easiest and most reliable means of contact. During the academic year, your cadets will be assigned to one of eight companies: Alfa, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Echo, Foxtrot, Golf or Hotel. Therefore, if you are unable to contact your cadet, you can contact the cadet watch office at 444-8294. The watch office will contact the cadet in their respective company.

C. *When are the most frequent times cadets will call or want to stay over?*

Generally, you can expect cadets to call you on the weekends, rather than during the week. Depending on the cadet's activity participation, cadets may visit frequently on the weekend. Fourth Class Liberty during the school year is: on normal Saturdays from 1200-0100 Sunday and on normal Sundays from 0800-1800. A cadet may be available to stay overnight on holidays and long weekends from Friday afternoon to Sunday night).

IV. Academy Personnel

If you need to reach a staff member regarding your sponsor cadet, the first person to contact is the cadet's Company Officer. This officer is in the best position to answer your questions or address your concerns. The name and phone numbers of Company officers are available through the Cadet Watch Office, 444-8294. This is also the best emergency contact. These are the ranking personnel at the Academy for 2006-2007.

Superintendent

J.S. Burhoe, Rear Admiral, USCG

Assistant Superintendent

J.E. Rendon, Captain, USCG

Commandant of Cadets

J.C O'Connor, III, Captain, USCG

Assistant Commandant of Cadets

C.M. Davidson, Commander, USCG

Dean of Academics

Dr. K.J. Colella, Captain, USCG

Director of Admissions

S.P Finton, Captain, USCG

Director of Athletics

Dr. R. Cieplik

Director of Social Development

Mrs. M.J. Bowen

V: Sponsor Program Contact:

Erika Lund

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