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Attorney General Racine Encourages D.C. National Guard Capital Guardian Youth ChalleNGe Academy Cadets at Graduation

Residential Program Helps Students Who Have Struggled in Traditional School Settings

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On Saturday, Attorney General Karl A. Racine congratulated the graduating cadets in a D.C. National Guard program for at-risk youth on their perseverance and encouraged the cadets to pay forward the investment that so many have made in their success by giving back. His remarks came at the graduation ceremony for Class No. 44 of the Guard’s Capital Guardian Youth ChalleNGe Academy.

“I know you have been through months of really hard work, and I know you are part of this academy in the first place because each of you had to overcome struggles you experienced in traditional school programs,” Attorney General Racine said. **“But *today* you are here at this ceremony because you have persevered and succeeded in disciplining yourselves and motivating yourselves to finish your studies – and that is a remarkable achievement in itself.”**

The Capital Guardian Youth ChalleNGe Academy is part of a nationwide program of similar academies sponsored by National Guard units. The academies target participants who are unemployed, drug-free and law-free high-school dropouts, 16 to 18 years of age. The cadets go through a months-long residential program that includes military-style instruction in life skills. After graduation, they spend a year paired with an outside mentor. The overwhelming majority of Capital Guardian Academy graduating cadets have been admitted to the University of District of Columbia, have gained employment or are participating in job-skills programs, or have enlisted in the armed forces.

“Every kid needs responsible adults in their lives to help them live up to their potential,” Attorney General Racine told the cadets. **“But there’s a corollary to that truth: *Every kid who has benefited from others has a responsibility to give back.* That includes me, it includes you, and it includes everyone else in this room.”**

For more information about the Capital Guardian Youth ChalleNGe Academy, visit <http://www.cgyca.org/>.

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