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**National Guard Youth Foundation Announces Scholarship Recipients**

*National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program Graduates to Use the Funds Toward College, Trade and Vocational Schools*

**ALEXANDRIA, Va. –** The National Guard Youth Foundation (NGYF), the national nonprofit that supports the National Guard Youth Challe*NG*e Program, today announced the winners of the NGYF spring scholarship competition. The awards include $3,000 scholarships renewable for up to two years or $5,000 scholarships renewable for up to four years.

“We are honored to work with the National Guard Youth Challe*NG*e Program to offer additional support to the graduates and assist them as they can continue their path of success,” **said Louis A. Cabrera, President of the National Guard Youth Foundation.** “I congratulate the recipients of the scholarship competition who have taken the “Challe*NG*e” to change their lives for the better.”

$3,000, two-year scholarship winners:

* **Brittany Abner – Hoosier Youth Challe*NG*e Academy in Knightstown, Ind.**
* **Tyler Bradley – Thunderbird Youth Academy in Pryor, Okla.**
* **Marty Guillen – New Mexico Youth Challe*NG*e Academy in Roswell, N.M.**
* **Shenique Pearson – Lincoln’s Challe*NG*e Academy in Rantoul, Ill.**
* **Diana Rico – Oregon Youth Challe*NG*e Program in Bend, Ore.**

$5,000, four-year scholarship winners:

* **Devyn Fifer – Alaska Military Youth Academy in Anchorage, Alaska**
* **Sara Holtzman – Michigan Youth Challe*NG*e Academy in Battle Creek, Mich.**
* **Preston Ponder – Louisiana Youth Challe*NG*e Program in Camp Minden, La.**
* **Evelyne Rodriguez – Texas Challe*NG*e Academy in Sheffield, Texas**
* **Nafise Watson – Hawaii Youth Challe*NG*e in Kapolei, Hawaii**

Conducted at 35 academies across the country, the National Guard Youth Challe*NG*e Program is operated in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Defense, National Guard Bureau, state governments and local sites. The program consists of a 5 1/2-month residential phase framed around eight core components: academic excellence, responsible citizenship, physical fitness, leadership/followership, job skills, service to the community, health and hygiene and life coping skills and, as importantly, a 12-month post residential phase that matches a mentor to each graduate.

Helping more than 120,000 teens to date turn their lives around, Challe*NG*e is recognized as among the most cost-effective, highly rated programs of its kind for at-risk youth.

* An independent, multi-year study of the program by MDRC shows that high school diploma/ GED attainment increased by 29%; college attendance increased by 86% and annual earnings increased by 20%.
* An independent cost-benefit analysis by the RAND Corporation shows a 166% return on investment in the program – every dollar spent yielded a return of $2.66 in benefits to society.

NGYF awards two- and four-year scholarships to graduates of the National Guard Youth Challe*NG*e Program to contribute to tuition and tuition-related expenses for colleges, vocational and trade schools. Last year, NGYF awarded nearly $500,000 in tuition assistance to Challe*NG*e graduates. The next scholarship competition will be held in the fall.

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**About the National Guard Youth Foundation**

The National Guard Youth Foundation is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to addressing the nation’s school dropout crisis by giving youth a second chance through the National Guard Youth Challe*NG*e Program, which provides education, mentorship and life skills to its participants and has been independently rated one of the nation’s most cost-effective and successful programs for youth at risk of, or have dropped out of school. The Foundation advocates for and supports Challe*NG*e, run by the National Guard; raises awareness of the impact that the school dropout crisis has on our society, economy and national security; and provides Challe*NG*e graduates with scholarships and career support to help them continue on their path of success. For more information, visit [www.ngyf.org](http://www.ngyf.org).