During our son’s Knob year, our lives were suddenly filled with the new (and often-times unexplainable) experiences that accompanied the life-changing events that define Knob year. Yes, our son went through much and he bore the brunt of the learning curve load. However, as all parents of Cadets can attest, The Citadel is a journey for us all. With our close proximity to Lesesne Gate, our home life was a constant blur of Knob faces and voices during any given periods of general leave. We learned a lot from their stories, some hard but mostly humorous.

As such, our interaction with the many Cadets and the experience of watching our son’s progress through Knob year provided useful preparation for our time as co-chairs of The Citadel Family Association. Having now been in the post for nearly a year, we never could have imagined just how fulfilling this experience would become.

Our first undertaking was to learn as much as we could from the outgoing CFA Chairs - Jackie & Greg Bear. With 2014’s Matriculation Day but a few months away, we had a lot of work to do to ensure that our Blue Shirt Army was in place, and that our volunteers were ready to go to support the incoming Knob parents through that challenging first day.

From our vantage point, Matriculation Day was successful beyond our expectations. Much of this credit is due to our Volunteer & Membership Coordinators, Don & Tracy Blackburn, who took on the daunting task of organizing our 270 volunteers. This included merchandise orders, volunteer assignments, business card production, and all transactions.

It was inspiring to watch our CFA Board colleagues put the Blackburns logistical efforts into action from the moment the first car came through The Citadel’s gates. However, what carried the day were the efforts of those 270 volunteers, our Blue Shirt Army. Hailing from as far away as Texas and New York, our selfless team of volunteers arrived early, rolled up their sleeves, and proceeded in doing the best work this organization likely has ever seen!

We feel certain that not a single Knob family left unmoved by the kindness and generous support that the CFA Blue Shirt Volunteers provided throughout that trying first day on campus. This was evident in the many compliments and great praise we received by parents, administrators, and Tactical Officers.

As we have said many times before, THANK YOU! Your awesome display of selflessness embodies all that is great about The Citadel family.

Another important duty for us in the CFA is to provide a helpful presence throughout the year to freshman parents. While our Company & Area CFA Representatives provide the frontline support towards this end throughout the year, the CFA Board is also engaged in...
educating future Cadet Parents about the support our organization provides. This is accomplished during the Admissions Office’s 8 scheduled Pre-Knob Overnight visits. Michael and I have spoken to the incoming Cadet parents, on behalf of the CFA, at all six Pre-Knobs that have transpired thus far. These events have allowed the CFA to educate these nervous parents in both group and individual setting as to the support they will soon receive from our organization. This forum has given us the opportunity to explain to the parents about what to expect on Matriculation Day and throughout the coming year. We feel that we are easing some restless hearts and encouraging thoughtful decision-making.

Besides the Pre-Knob events, the CFA holds regular face-to-face meetings throughout the year and numerous teleconference meetings to keep our organization on track and ready for all of our duties. Because of our many discussions, the input we have received from CFA representatives, and the evolving nature of how The CFA operates, we have proposed important changes to the CFA’s Constitution and Bylaws. The CFA Bylaws and Constitution were last amended in 2001, and as such, many things have changed since that warranted our proposals below.

Areas of change include:

• Adding a new Board position (Communications Chair)

• Elevating the Volunteer Membership Coordinator role to a Board position

• Simplifying the document language and clarifying the Board position responsibilities.

• The upcoming CFA Annual Meeting, taking place on Friday, March 13th of Corps Day weekend we will be holding the annual meeting of the CFA. All are invited and encouraged to attend. This year we will be making a few changes to our constitution. We would love to have your input on these matters.

We see these changes as critical to meeting the organizations need in this modern, technology driven era. All these amendments require a vote, and thus we encourage everyone to join us!

Lastly, at the CFA Annual Meeting we will sadly be saying farewells to two very hard working members of our board. CFA Vice Chairman, Jill Campion and CFA Secretary Amy Russo will rotate off the board at the conclusion of this academic year with the graduation of their cadets – yay! Both of these women have brought so much to the table during the course of their tenures on the board. Personally, we would like to add that we feel tremendous gratitude to both Jill and Amy for their guidance and support throughout the first year of our role as Co-Chairs of the CFA. Jill & Amy, your cheerful counsel and support have been greatly appreciated. From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you for your support and service to the CFA, and toward the betterment of The Citadel.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the annual meeting on Corps Day, March 13th. Until then and after, we remain,

Respectfully yours,

Michael & Nicole Givens
Co-Chairs - Citadel Family Association

KNOB YEAR - THE FINISH LINE & BEYOND! - Shamus Gillen, ’96

Knob Parents have vicariously experienced nearly 7 months of the challenging first year here at The Citadel. Congratulations - the Knob year finish line is now within sight! Recognition Day is one of the hallmark days of the Cadet career. It provides a moment for Knobs to suddenly put the challenging school into a new perspective and unabashedly review the many challenges, defeats, and successes. This “rearview mirror” moment provides newly discovered clarity as to the vast changes and growth experienced by the entire class, newly bound in the success of completion.

However, this is but just the beginning of the long road to becoming a successful graduate of The Citadel. The next three years will be about discovering, refining and practicing more and more advanced leadership skills while assuming exponentially growing responsibilities. What I have discovered about this process is that despite the growing complexity of life throughout the upper class years, there are simple questions cadets can ask themselves each day that will keep them true:

1. What have I done today to achieve the best possible grades?

2. What have I done today for the people around me?

These two simple questions have broad implications once Cadets enter life beyond the Commencement Exercise stage. More so than ever in history, student undergraduate GPAs have become the first barometer for professional opportunity, regardless of whether that be in the military, the public, or the private sector. Cadets have no shortage of support networks, so parents should engage their Cadets and ensure they are pursuing every opportunity to improve areas of weakness, or even refine areas of strength.

Academic Affairs - www.citadel.edu/root/academicaffairs

Academic Advising - www.citadel.edu/root/academicadvising

Academic Service Support Center - www.citadel.edu/root/asc

Oral Communications Lab - www.citadel.edu/root/ocl
In addition, Cadets must make the best possible use of their summer breaks by pursuing every possible professional development opportunity (even those with military contracts). Working with Career Services to seek out internships, work assignments, study abroad programs, and other avenues is a vital component to cultivating professional networks, career field experience, and insight into future desired professions:

Career Services:
www.citadel.edu/root/career

There is no getting away from the fact that college graduates must be extremely well prepared, from an experience and credential standpoint, to be competitive in today’s challenging employment environment. The Career Services team is extraordinarily talented at linking Cadets with professional development opportunities around the globe. Ensure that your Cadet has engaged this office about summer possibilities that will enhance their credentials.

Lastly, parents should encourage their Cadets to connect with local Citadel alumni, ideally through a Citadel Club. Alumni very much enjoy engaging current Cadets and connectivity with Citadel Clubs can yield opportunity. As noteworthy as our alumni network is, unless a student fully leverages it in the pursuit of their professional aspirations opportunity will be lost.

A list of Citadel Clubs from around the world can be found on the dropdown menu here: www.citadelalumni.org

Again, the Citadel Family Association bids you welcome to Corps Day Weekend, and wishes those parents of current Knobs a hearty congratulations on getting this far. The CFA Board withes you all the best of luck with Recognition Day.

Warmest regards,

Shamus Gillen, '96
CFA Liaison Officer

Special Thanks to South Carolina Federal Credit Union for their generous contributions to the Citadel Family Association, and their support of this newsletter.
CORPS DAY WEEKEND SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, MARCH 12 AND FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2015

2015 Krause Leadership Symposium: www.citadel.edu/root/krausecenter-symposium
An assortment of immense talent and accomplishment will be gathered to share wisdom with the Corps of Cadets and Citadel constituency.

THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2015

11:00 a.m. - Greater Issues Address on “Moral Courage in Life, the Military, and Business,” Gen. Peter Pace, McAlister Field House
12:00 p.m. - Noon: Corps Birthday Celebration at Coward Hall.
The oldest graduate and the youngest cadet share cake cutting honors. Invitation only.
4:00 p.m. - Presentation on “Ethics in the Profession of Arms,” Rear Adm. Margaret DeLuca “Peg” Klein, Buyer Auditorium in Mark Clark Hall

FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2015

1:15 p.m. - Krause Award Presentation and Address on “Contemporary Ethical Issues Facing Communities,” Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr., McAlister Field House - See more at: www.citadel.edu/root/corps-day-2015#sthash.Ggwxaq4.dpuf
2:00 p.m. - The Citadel Family Association Annual Meeting - Duckett Hall Auditorium
3:45 p.m. - Parade - Summerall Field

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 2015

7:30 a.m. - Board of Visitors Breakfast. For former and current BOV members. Located at Greater Issues Room, Mark Clark Hall
Invitation only.
8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Sale of cadet/company photographs at Mark Clark Hall; Reception Room.
8:30 a.m. - 8:50 a.m. The Citadel Rifle Legion performance at Summerall Field. Canceled if raining.
8:30-10 a.m. - Barracks and facilities open to visitors. Regimental Pipe Band will perform at each barracks.
9:00 a.m. - Summerall Guards performance/ Bond Volunteers exchange of rifles/Presentation of Anthony Griffin Sword and Club Award at Summerall Field. In the event of inclement weather, the awards move to Deas Hall.
9:45 a.m. - The Citadel Story – A musical narration of the history of The Citadel at Summerall Field. Canceled if raining.
11 a.m. - Dress parade with presentation of Palmetto Medals at Summerall Field. In the event of inclement weather, the Parade is canceled and the awards presentation moves to Buyer Auditorium in Mark Clark Hall.
12:30 p.m. - 5th annual Beautiful Bulldog Contest at Johnson Hagood Stadium. (11:30 - registration)

SUNDAY, March 15, 2015

9:00 a.m. - Protestant Service at Summerall Chapel
11 a.m. - Episcopal Service at Charleston area churches. Please contact the Chaplain's office at 843-953-5049 for more information.
11:15 a.m. - Catholic Service at Sacred Heart Church with Catholic Color Guard Change of Command. No shuttle bus.
- See more at: www.citadel.edu/root/corps-day-2015#sthash.0CKDuC.dpuf
12:00 p.m. - Noon: - judging
12:00 p.m. - Lacrosse vs. North Georgia - Johnson Hagood Stadium
1:00 p.m. - Blue-White Spring Football Game at Johnson Hagood Stadium
- See more at: www.citadel.edu/root/corps-day-2015#sthash.0CKDuC.dpuf
1:45 p.m. - winners announced during halftime of the Blue-White spring football game
Sponsored by The Citadel Football Association
Registration closes at 5 p.m. Friday, March 13
For entry details visit The Citadel Football Association web site.
7:00 p.m. - Roman Catholic Mass - Summerall Chapel