Welcome Parents and Families of the Class of 2023!

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to The Citadel’s Parents’ Program and some of the topics you’ll find useful in preparing for August 17th.

Studies have shown, despite the distance, walls and barbed wire, parents and family members remain the first choice a Cadet’s looks to for advice. We support that relationship because studies also show Cadets perform better when their parents and family members engage “effectively.” Effective engagement requires you to change your role from “decision maker” to one that provides sound advice when asked. For some it’s easy, while others are concerned that without their help, their Cadet will make poor decisions and fail. Well, unless they violate the Honor Code or use illegal drugs, poor decisions rarely end a career at The Citadel. As a matter of fact, most will fail sometime during their career at The Citadel which is ok, because it’s the process of recovering from their failure that results in them learning from their mistakes and becoming more confident in their abilities.

We are now in year three of piloting this Parents’ Program with the goal of helping you be effective advisor for your Cadet. We want to provide the information you need to provide a thoughtful answer when asked. That information could come from us or the college’s subject matter expert on the issue. Bottom-line is we want you to be an effective advisor and have a Citadel experience as good as your Cadet’s!

The Parents’ Program falls under the Provost who is second to the President in seniority. It is staffed by Captain Taylor Skardon (USN) who is a 1982 graduate and previously served as the Executive Assistant to the President. Captain Skardon’s phone and email (preferred) are normally forwarded to his mobile phone, which allows him to work issues soon after they are sent to him. We hope you will take time to meet him and the Provost at the Information Fair on Matriculation Day. Our contact information is:

Phone: 843-754-4494
Email: parents@citadel.edu
Website: http://www.citadel.edu/root/welcome-parents

Lesson #1: The Citadel Experience

Over the next four years, your Cadet will participate in The Citadel Experience which combines an ethical basis with leadership opportunities. The goal is to develop them as principled leaders. This leadership model is composed of three distinct areas:

Core Values – The Citadel’s Core Values are Honor, Duty, and Respect. These values are key to how we treat one another and provide the foundation of our principled leadership model. These values are discussed in the Guidon which will be the most read book by your Cadet. You can find the 19-20 Guidon online by clicking here.
Four Pillars – Leader development focuses on four functional areas known as “pillars”:

- **Character** – This pillar instills the high moral standards represented by the college’s core values and the key behaviors manifested by principled leaders who act accordingly. It is supported through a number of leadership development courses managed by the Krause Center for Leadership and Ethics. Practical application of what is learned in the classroom takes place in our “leadership labs,” more commonly known as the “barracks.”

- **Academics** – Academic success provides the requisite specialized knowledge and skills to succeed in a chosen professional field or career path. This pillar encourages lifelong learning and shapes intellectual ability by expanding knowledge, developing critical thinking skills, analyzing complex problems, and producing innovative solutions. It is measured by the Grade Point Average (GPA) and accumulating the appropriate number of credit hours overall and in the selected major.

- **Military** – The military pillar develops personal discipline, a commitment to serve, and a strong sense of honor, duty, and respect. It also creates an environment for cadets to experience and demonstrate a capacity for teamwork, genuine respect for others, and mutual accountability among team members. Your Cadet’s TAC (Teacher, Advisor, and Coach) who observes his or her behavior and performance on a daily basis conducts much of this evaluation.
• **Fitness** – A focus on fitness engages cadets in developing the physical and mental strength and endurance necessary to attain an optimum functioning of their bodies and minds, even within environments of prolonged stress. The Citadel creates systems that enhance and monitor fitness for each cadet through bouts of physical and mental challenges, along with proper recovery from those challenges. We use The Citadel Physical Effectiveness Program (CPEP) guidelines to measure Cadets’ physical fitness. The Citadel Physical Fitness Test (CPFT) is administered each semester. You can find the program requirements [here](#).

**Four Stages** – The Core Values and Four Pillars support the leadership experiences your Cadet will have within the Corps of Cadets. Each developmental stage has a different focus that corresponds with the Cadet Class year:

• **Prepare**: Freshmen prepare by engaging in an intense environment where they learn to operate under stress and to stretch themselves by reaching into the deepest aspects of self-awareness, character, and perseverance.

• **Engage**: During this transition stage from followership to first-line leadership, sophomores engage by learning the skills associated with direct leadership of individuals and small teams and the management of specific administrative and logistical duties under close supervision but with no intermediary leader between themselves and their subordinates.

• **Serve**: Juniors serve by personally and directly engaging in leadership, applying the skills, and practicing the behaviors learned in the first two stages and assuming holistic responsibility for the people under their care.

• **Lead**: Seniors put together all their leadership development experiences as they accomplish broader and more complex organizational goals through organizing and influencing other leaders and making increased use of such tools as climate-setting, policy-making, and systems integration.

We hope you will take some time before Matriculation Day to discuss these concepts with your future Cadet.

**Preparing for The Citadel**

For those who had the opportunity to attend the briefings during the Pre-Knob visits, you heard General Walters talk about making sure it’s your son’s or daughter’s decision to attend The Citadel. How they behave this summer should give you a good idea how committed they are to attending The Citadel. Are they getting in shape? Have they purchased their shoes and taken time to break them in? Has there been an interest in reviewing the material found on the Matriculation Headquarters website? Have they started reading their *Guidon*? If they haven’t shown much interest, you may want to have a conversation to make sure they are still comfortable with their decision.
Prior to reporting we recommend you have some conversations with your incoming Cadet to make sure you share the same expectations. To help with those conversations, we have recorded some of our staff discussing the important programs they are responsible for on campus. You can access those videos by clicking here.

The Citadel Family Association (CFA)
The Citadel Family Association (CFA) is made up of parents of current cadets. Membership is free and no enrollment required, so you automatically become a member on Matriculation Day. You will get to meet many of the volunteers when you arrive on the 12th of August as they will help you get all your Cadet’s gear to their room. We recommend taking a look at their website by clicking here. One resource page you will want to get to know is the Company and Battalion Representatives. This is a list of current parents by Cadet Companies who have volunteered to help new parents navigate various issues that might arise during the year. Once you get your Company assignment (on Matriculation Day), look up your rep online.

Social Media
Social Media can be both a friend and foe. Some Facebook pages we recommend you join/monitor are:

The Citadel Webpage – provides information about upcoming events, important issues and general interest items about the College. It also houses webpages for all the different departments on campus. A big help in navigating the site is the “Search” located at the upper right-hand corner of the site. All you have to do is enter what you are searching for and it will provide the most relevant sites to your question. I use it every day!

The Citadel’s Facebook Page – Managed by our Office of Communication and Marketing, this site not only provides posts about the daily life on campus, but will also be your site for official announcements and information from the College such as school closings due to weather events.

The 2023 Class Facebook Page – this is a great location to find answers to any questions you may have while preparing for Matriculation Day or beyond. This site is restricted to Parents of Cadets entering with the Class of 2023 and monitored by Parents who child has recently graduated.

The Citadel Family Association Facebook Page – this site is managed by the CFA and provides good information when published by the College.

There are many other sites out there that allow more opinionated postings which you can enter, but are not recommended by us. Over the years I have found the postings offer opinions on information that is not correct. We recommend participating in those that are based on official word from the College.
Matriculation Day Evening

If you decide to spend Saturday night in Charleston, we hope you will join us for a BBQ buffet dinner at the HAC from 6-8PM. In the past this has been a nice time to meet other parents and take a deep breath while reflecting on the day. If you would like to join us, please [CLICK HERE to register].