

Senior Parents!

Almost there! I hope this message finds you getting ready to have your cadet home for the holidays! During this time, you may want to review the [Commencement Week 2020 website](#).

Graduation week will arrive before you know it. To make sure things go as planned, we recommend having a conversation with your cadet over the winter furlough that includes the following:

- **Are they on track for Graduation?** Your cadets should have met with their academic advisor this Fall, discussed their final semester and agreed when they will graduate - hopefully it's in May. I encourage parents to sit down with their cadet to review their transcript, "Degree Evaluation" and classes they have registered for the Spring Semester to double check they are eligible for graduation. All three products are available on [Lesesne Gateway](#). If either of you have any concerns, your cadet should meet with their academic advisor when they return from furlough BEFORE classes begin. Although we will be closed until the 2nd of January, I recommend emailing them now so they will be at the head of the line when they return. The goal is no surprises - for anyone!
- **How is the job search coming?** Spring also brings job offers for those heading into the workforce. 82% of our cadets will have a job offer in hand or will be headed to graduate school (medicine, law) when they cross the stage in May. If your cadet doesn't have a career plan, we strongly recommend that you encourage them to visit the [Career Services Center](#) when they return from furlough and meet with members of the staff.
- **Have they passed their Personal Fitness Assessment (PFA)?** Ask your cadets how they did on the Fall Semester PFA. You can find [the requirements for the test and the height/weight measurement here](#) and on the [Commandant's Webpage](#). As a reminder, they will have to pass the Spring Assessment in order to participate in the Graduation Ceremony. Although we encourage a healthy lifestyle that includes a daily exercise regimen, we find some cadets fill their free time with other activities that run counter to staying in shape. Also many head home for the holidays thinking they will have plenty of time to get within standards, but find out when they return their time is taken up doing other things. I cannot tell you how many good kids miss out on graduation because of a few inches or seconds. Encourage them to use the time over the holidays to get or stay in shape. If they need help, the folks who manage the PFA are happy to help if asked.

Finally, if they have an injury or condition that prevents them from taking the test or exercising, tell them to make sure it is documented in their health record at the

infirmary - do it now, not the day before the test! Also, a doctor's note after the test won't work.

- **Cadet until after graduation!** Both you and your cadet have worked hard to get where you are today. Remind your cadet that they are a cadet until after graduation. Some of the toughest conversations I've had with parents is to tell them their cadet will not be participating in graduation because they did not obey the rules the night before graduation. Make sure your cadet understands your expectations - and has a haircut for Commencement!

With that in mind, remember furlough ends at 1800 (6PM) on Sunday 12 January. Muster is at 1830. Don't be late!

- Finally, if you are looking for the **perfect Christmas or graduation gift for your cadet**, we recommend giving them a *lifetime membership* in the Citadel Alumni Association. We have one of the strongest associations in our nation and one that your cadet will participate in after graduation. If purchased before Graduation, lifetime memberships cost \$400 compared to the normal \$700 (\$500 if purchased within the first year after graduation). For more information on memberships, please visit the [CAA's website](#).

The senior cadet's Spring semester should be the best time of their Citadel career (*and their parents' as well!*). As their primary advisor, you play an important role in helping them finish their cadet career strong! We hope the information provided above helps with those important conversations. If you need more information, please contact us by phone at 843-953-6088 or by email at parents@citadel.edu.

Have a great Spring - and final - Semester!

Taylor Skardon
Captain USN (Ret)