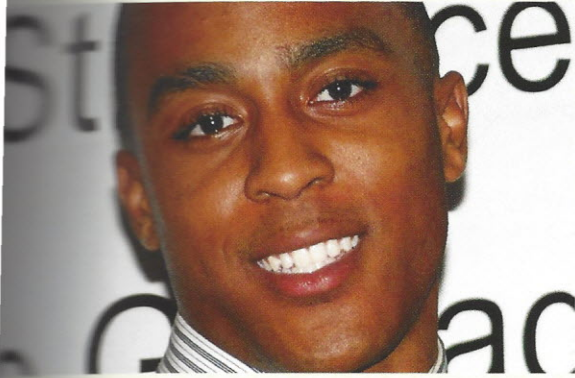


"Camden Experience"

One of our long term teachers, the late Colonel Sonny Brown, best described the term. People that utilize the term instinctively know what it means because they have lived it. The most important question is what does it mean to a new cadet? It means living away from family and friends, often for the first time. In order to be a successful cadet at Camden you will be required to do a lot of things that may be different from your regular routine. For example, due to the ultimate aim being discipline, one must get up and go to bed early. Obviously since CMA is a military school, you will be constantly exposed and introduced to the military system and experience having a roommate. Even though the process that you will go through may seem rough, the faculty, staff, and tac officers will ALWAYS be there to guide you and answer any questions you might have. Most importantly, you must always remember that at the end of your "Camden Experience" you will have a wealth of knowledge and understanding that will last a lifetime.



Giovanni Arrindell

Class of 2011, Bravo Company

Life after Camden.

My name is Giovanni Arrindell. I attended CMA during the 2010-2011 school year. Prior to my arrival I was experiencing some hardships with personal discipline. Attending CMA helped mold me into a positive and contributing member of society. Before I came to CMA I had been denied all of my first school choices. Nonetheless, I was disheartened. CMA gave me another chance and hope. I ended up being accepted into more than 10 universities. I am still studying Business Management and I am looking forward to graduating in May. My experience after Camden is a continuous process, as life is a long journey. The CMA experience on my life has forever shaped me into a productive and honorable man.

Rivers Killen

Class of 2001, Alpha Company

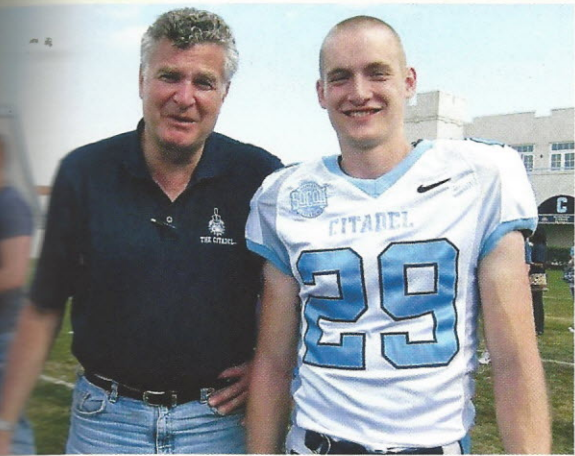
As I sit here, 15 years after graduation, I still have nothing but fond memories of my time at CMA. I met some really fascinating people that molded me into the person I am today! I met some lifelong friends and mentors that will forever be a part of my life. It started with LTC Cook! He was my tac officer in A company and a man I looked up to all three years. He was a parental figure and somebody I trusted and respected. He helped me make the transition of leaving home at 15 years old, as smooth as possible. CMA taught me life lessons that I continue to use in my professional career, but most important to me have been the organizational skills I have learned. My career is in outside sales and one where I make my own schedule pretty much daily. I often look back to my rigid daily schedule at CMA and use it as guidance for my current schedule.



John Crye

Class of 2011, Alpha Company

The Camden experience: CMA enabled me to achieve great success both academically and athletically to a greater degree than ever before. It set the precedence for the level of achievement that I would carry with me into college. The structure that CMA provides was an improvement in my overall lifestyle; upon reflection, I realize that many people struggle with time management and discipline. I chose to take a chance on Camden and it lead me to The Citadel where I graduated with honors. I now apply the same focus and goal oriented gratification to my career. While the system is greatly credited, I am also thankful for the involvement from the faculty. Coach Beckham helped me a lot with my confidence on the football field. He went the extra mile to help develop my skills as a collegiate prospect. Also, LTC John Heflin was very influential in showing me what was important as I chose my goals and learning what was important as far as my college selections.



Blake Holmes

Class of 2012, Delta Company

My road before Camden Military Academy was a rocky one. My life was like a movie where the kid wasn't going anywhere, but he had so much potential. He had the chance to become whatever he wanted to be, but only the viewers could see it. He didn't care about anything but himself. He knew he needed help, but how was he going to tell someone he needed help, when he told everyone he was fine. He had the starting QB position on the varsity football team as a sophomore. Everyone knew he had a special talent and was so proud of him.

He arrived at school on game day wearing his khaki pants and his team polo, ready to check in with the coach. He was then told he couldn't play that night because of his GPA (1.6). The coach said "We need you to bring those grades up, and we'll get you on the field this season." The young boy was devastated. Family and friends couldn't believe what had happened to him. He was lost without sports and felt like he had nothing going for him. He then went down an even darker path.

I was that kid, and I was soon confronted by my parents about going to Camden Military Academy. Believe it or not, I was very accepting, and thank God I went. Thank God I had parents that loved me so much, even after all the trouble I had given them. They did this because they cared, and luckily I realized that. Camden was the place that picked me up. I was surrounded by kids that were from the exact place I was, in a hole looking to climb out. Together we knew we had to do better, and better we did. One of the first people I met when I arrived at CMA was CSM Wilder, a big man with a deep voice that would intimidate an NFL linebacker, let alone a second semester high school sophomore. I greeted him with my hands in my pockets, and the first thing he said to me was nothing more than "Get your hands out of your pockets, son." He had my respect very quickly.

My years at Camden allowed me to rise to a 2nd lieutenant in my junior year and company commander in my senior year. During my senior year, I helped mentor, shape, and lead fifty-six cadets. This allowed me to better understand myself and to want to help others. Everyone under me had the potential to be something great. They were just lost. My Camden experience is one that I would never give up for anything. I'm now a senior at The Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina. This road would never have opened, if I had stayed the way I was. Camden Military Academy was a blessing for me. Camden is indeed a place like the poem by Robert Frost. "...the road less traveled by."

