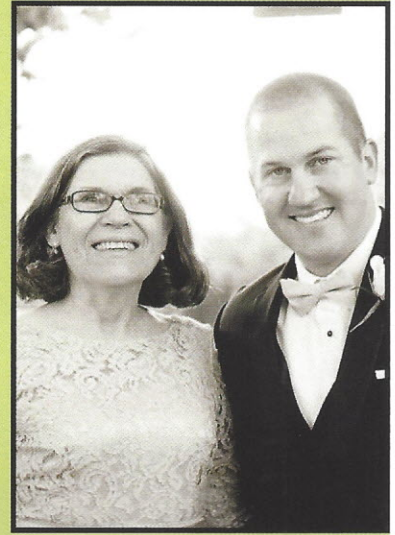




Zack Butler (Class of 2003)

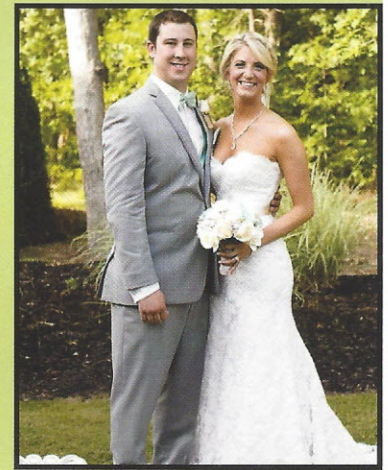
The years of 2001-2003 are ones that I will forever remember when I was a cadet at Camden Military Academy. We had some top recruits for athletics come to the academy. I was a short junior at the time and a runner on the cross country team, not weighing more than 170 lbs. and standing just 5'10", but I wanted to play on the basketball team. I will never forget after classes in October going into Coach Heflin's room and bringing up the conversation about my wanting to join the team. I told him ahead of time that I did not feel like I would ever have a shot at making the team with players of the likes of Larry Blair, Xavier Littleberry, and Vance Carraway. Coach Priester (Head Coach) and Coach Heflin (Assistant Coach) had a long conversation with me about how I was good enough and could make the team. I went for it! I remember getting into the gym for tryouts and standing in the layup line as the shortest and skinniest guy on the court and completely air balling my first shot. Those two years playing on the team were incredible. We traveled all over playing some of the top high school teams on the East Coast, like Oak Hill Academy.

Two years playing on the Varsity basketball team taught me some valuable lessons about how there is no "I" in "team". We had a mantra on the team of "One Heartbeat", meaning that we were nothing without each other, and if one person messed up during practice or in the game we all would have to pay the price. A heart is very similar to a team in that you need all of the parts to function as one; if one part fails, then the heart will not function correctly. I didn't make much out of my basketball career, but was fortunate enough--thanks to the help of Coach Heflin and Coach Priester--to get a scholarship to Wingate University for Cross Country. To this day I reflect back on the years at Camden and the valuable lessons I learned playing on the basketball team those two years.



Andrew Moore (Class of 2007)

When I first got to Camden, I was coming in as a senior. I didn't know anyone, had no idea how Camden operated, or how I landed in the Band Company (I can't play a single instrument or even carry a tune). SGM Greene was my TAC; he was firm yet understanding, and as the year went on he became more of a role model and someone I could talk to about anything. Don't think he took it easy on me, though. He made sure I stayed in line (my parents still appreciate everything he did for me to this day--as do I). I played football and baseball that year and met cadets and coaches that I still talk to 11 years later. The academics, structure, teachers and staff were second to none. They taught me life lessons and, particularly, how to own up to my mistakes. Furthermore, if it weren't for Coach Heflin, I wouldn't have gone to college. He stayed on top of me in applying to colleges. I ended up graduating with honors and lettered in two sports. Thanks Hef! Outside of the class room, Coach Roberts, Beckham, and Rice showed me how to push myself past what I thought were my limits, what good sportsmanship is all about, and how to be a leader. Without them, I wouldn't be half the man I am today. Now, I am married with a son, and I am a full-time Firefighter/EMT. I would say to anyone considering Camden Military Academy and to those who resent being there, "You will appreciate it when you are older. Take in the lessons taught. They will mean more to you than you will ever know." And I now say to EVERYONE who helped me at Camden Military Academy, THANK YOU!



Lane Boone (Class of 2009)

There have been many experiences in my life that I will cherish, and the four years I attended CMA are one of those. I had come to CMA with a chip on my shoulder and it reflected in my character and my attitude towards basic daily tasks. Not that I was a major problem in my company, but anyone could tell I did not want to be there, and I only cooperated in hopes of being able to go home. After excelling in academics my first year and going into my second, I pleaded with my grandmother to let me come home permanently while I was on Christmas break. This changed after having a talk with my mentor, Rob Miller, who challenged me to make the most of my experience and hold to the end of the school year to decide to leave or stay. After coming back from break and continuing my sophomore year, I embraced everything the academy had to offer. Upon completing my sophomore year I was promoted to 2nd lieutenant for my upcoming junior year. Then, everything came to fruition after I interviewed for the Battalion Commander position, even though I decided Company Commander of Alpha Company was best suited for me going into my senior year.

LTC Armstrong, Coach Horn, and CSM Brooks are individuals who I have immense respect for because they saw past my faults and gave me invaluable insight into how I might thrive not only at CMA but for the rest of my life. A memory that sticks out is when I tried out for the JV basketball team in 9th grade and I didn't make it because of grades. There happened to be another Boone whose grades were mistaken for mine, and subsequently after seeing his mistake Coach Horn told me to be at the first practice. Who knows what I would be doing right now if Coach had not allowed me to play after that mishap because sports helped me get through tough times and to accept the fact that I was there to stay. Unfortunately, it wasn't until after I graduated that I realized Coach Heflin and I both had similar backgrounds, a fact which brought about an appreciation for him. CMA taught me patience, humility, and respect for those from different backgrounds, and I formed friendships that have gone beyond my cadet days at the academy. After those first two tough years, it finally paid off once I truly bought into the system and gave this institution a chance. I do not have one single moment that stands out because there were multiple moments that had helped me grow as an individual and into a man now with a family of my own. I would like to thank CMA for all of the ups and downs because these lessons helped cultivate me into the person that I am now.

