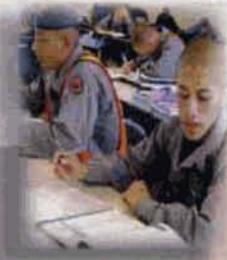


## Stanislaus Military Academy Supports Second Chances

We do not train our student cadets for a military career. We train our cadets for successful living by using military methods and bearing. Using physical exercise and military type discipline we help cadets learn to respect authority, develop an ability to follow rules, practice safety first and demonstrate appropriate behavior toward staff and other cadets.



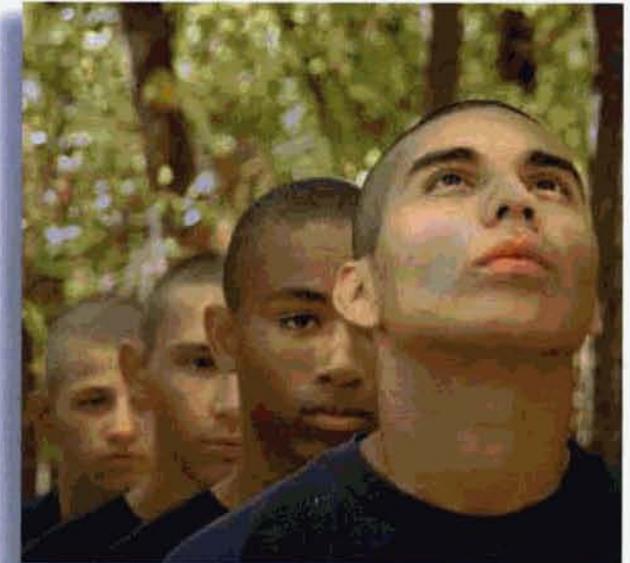
**Stanislaus Military Academy**  
**@ John B Allard Community School**  
350 North Kilroy Rd. Turlock, CA 95380  
Phone: (209) 238-6600 • Fax: (209) 238-6698



**Walk through our doors on your  
way to a better life.**



# ★ Stanislaus ★ Military Academy



Career, Charter & Alternative Education

Tom Changnon, Superintendent

# Great Futures Begin at SMA

## ★ DISCIPLINE

### ABOUT THE ACADEMY

The Stanislaus Military Academy is a unique program located at the John B. Allard campus that provides a comprehensive education in a military environment. All academic teachers hold a California Teaching Credential.

The program features:

- Academic Studies
- Physical Conditioning
- Strict Military Discipline
- Character Training
- Extra-Curricular Activities

### WHO CAN ATTEND

The Academy is open to any student enrolled in the Stanislaus County Alternative Education Program. Parents must be aware of the strict disciplinary and military environment and agree to all of its conditions prior to their child enrolling in the program. The goal of the Academy's rigorous requirements is to produce a high school graduate proud of his/her accomplishments.

### ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Stanislaus Military Academy offers two academic programs to help meet the needs of all students.

## ★ HONOR

### Junior Academy - Student Cadets in Grades 6-8

The program features:

- Study Skills
- Social Skills
- Character Training
- Physical Activity
- Extra-Curricular Activities

### Senior High Academy - Student Cadets in Grades 9-12

The program features a "fast track" academic program with trimesters beginning in August, November and March. Each day begins with physical training and Drill & Ceremony. Cadets then attend classes leading to a high school diploma or a GED Certificate. CAHSEE Prep Courses and tutoring will also be available.

### SKILLS TRAINING

The program also features:

- Career Planning
- Mentorship
- Job Shadowing
- Public Speaking Skills
- Work Experience
- Conflict Resolution

## ★ RESPECT

### EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Field Trips
- Campouts and Hiking
- Drum and Bugle Corp
- Military Fitness

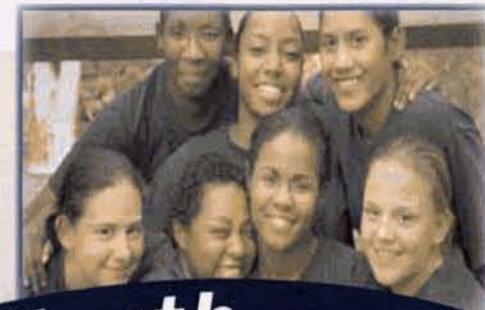
### COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Community volunteers and service clubs are partners in supporting this new program for our youth.

### CORE BELIEFS

- Discipline
- Respect
- Honor
- Commitment
- Courage

## ★ COURAGE



## ★ COMMITMENT

# Real Solutions for Today's Youth

# STANISLAUS MILITARY ACADEMY



## CORE VALUES OF SMA

### **1. COMMITMENT**

Pledging my loyalty to SMA and to the leadership and the cadets of the corps.

### **2. DISCIPLINE**

Controlling my behavior through hard work and training to correct and improve my character.

### **3. RESPECT**

Submitting to authority and to the rules and regulations of SMA.

### **4. COURAGE**

Meeting the challenge to do my best at all times and in all situations.

### **5. HONOR**

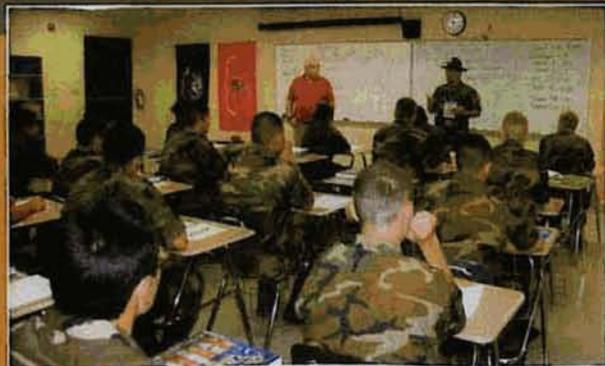
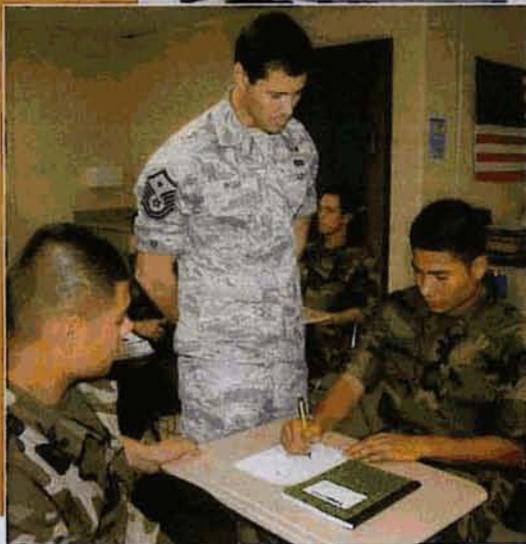
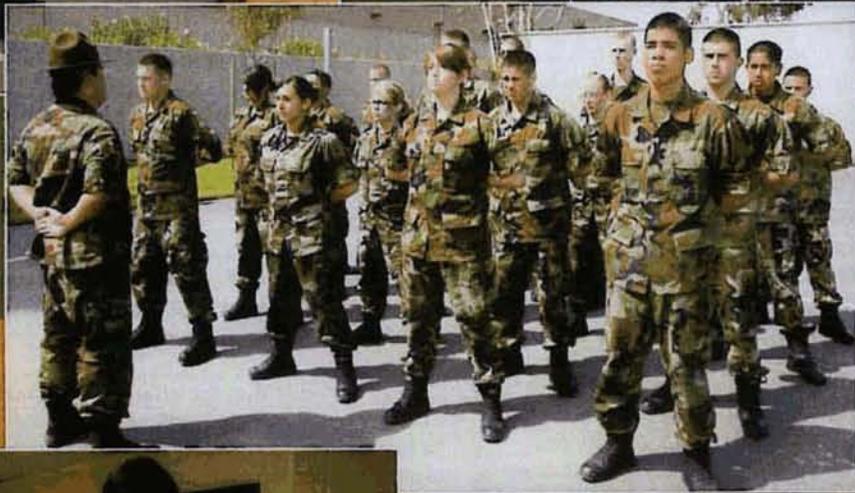
Being responsible to fulfill my duty to God, family, school, and country.

## BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE

HORIZON HIGHLIGHTS

# STANISLAUS MILITARY ACADEMY:

## Innovative Education for At-Risk Youth



**I**T'S a crisp November evening in Downtown Modesto, and close to 50 high school students are gathered at the Martin G. Petersen Event Center for a graduation. Parents sit in the crowds and talk anxiously to one another, stopping intermittently to snap pictures of their child, while administrators and teachers dressed in suits and ties sit on the stage and offer congratulatory speeches and well wishes. The air is celebratory and triumphant.

But this ceremony is different than a typical high school graduation. Rather than overflowing with joy and relief, these students are reserved and rigid. They stand like statues: Bodies frozen in place, hands parallel to their sides, eyes fixed forward. And instead of the traditional cap and gown, the graduates are dressed from head to toe in military fatigues.

They are the new graduates of the Stanislaus Military Academy, an alternative education program that seeks to provide at-risk youth with a structured, disciplined framework that promotes quality education and character building.

#### **FROM IDEA TO REALITY IN ONE YEAR**

The Stanislaus Military Academy is the brainchild of Stanislaus County Superintendent Tom Changnon, who was inspired after hearing a presentation on a similar program at a superintendent's conference in the Fall of 2008. Upon returning, he enlisted the help of Director of Community Support Services Fred Bigler, and began turning the vision of having a military academy in Stanislaus County a reality. Over the next year, Changnon and Bigler sought the help of both educators and veterans to help craft the outline of the program, and in the Fall of 2009 the Academy welcomed its first batch of recruits.

The Academy meets at John B. Allard School in Turlock, and acts as a "school within a school." Students who are expelled from other county high schools are sent to Allard and given three options: conventional classroom education, independent study, and the Stanislaus Military Academy. Those that choose the Academy are exposed to a unique style of education that helps the students get back on track with their course credits. Students are given typical coursework—science, math, arts, and social studies—but they also learn drill formations, marches, survival skills, and first aid, and they wear military fatigues at all times. "We seek to build kids up within the parameters of a military system," explains Bigler.

In addition to normal class time, cadets participate in week-long "boot camps" that involve team building exercises, character-building tasks, and education in remote locations, such as the Boy Scout Camp in Livingston. New students start as recruits, and once they graduate from "boot camp," they become Cadets, and then graduate through another program to become Advanced Cadets. As they move up through the ranks, the students earn ranks and are awarded with places of leadership among the students.

#### **SUCCESS AND MORE**

So far, the program has been widely successful. In their

first three months of existence, the Academy has graduated more than 50 students from their basic and advanced "boot camps," and they expect that number to increase as the program gains popularity.

Bigler believes that a lot of the Academy's success is due to the fact that it offers discipline and structure to many kids that aren't provided this with their friends, at home, or at school, and it allows them to form tight bonds with other students. He explains that many kids turn to gangs to find these things, and by offering them in a different context, the Academy serves as an effective "anti-gang." "We take all of the elements that draw kids to gangs—the similar dress, the language, the structure, the adventure, the brotherhood—and turn them into something positive."

And so far, it seems to be working. Many of the kids that join the Academy were involved with gangs and drugs, or have trouble dealing with authority figures, and after only a few short months, these kids are leaving the program as changed men and women. "The impact is phenomenal," says Bigler, "I've seen more lives changed by this program than any other."

#### **STUDENTS TAKING OWNERSHIP**

Doug Ash, a counselor at Allard, has been impressed with the way that students have taken ownership of their responsibilities in the program and take the initiative to better themselves. "We're setting kids up for them to improve their own lives," he said, "And now these kids are engaged, they're respectful, and their mature."

"This program takes kids that no one wants, and it gives them a shot," adds Allard Principal Alberto Velarde, "These kids want a chance, and this program has given them hope."

Bigler goes on to explain that other Allard students are seeing the changes in these students and developing a desire to change as well. "These kids are changing the culture of the entire school," he says.

Changnon adds that the change is not isolated to schools, but it extends to the communities outside the school walls to parents, neighbors, and friends. "This program was designed to change lives," he says, "And we're seeing that change impact families, which ripples out into the rest of the community."

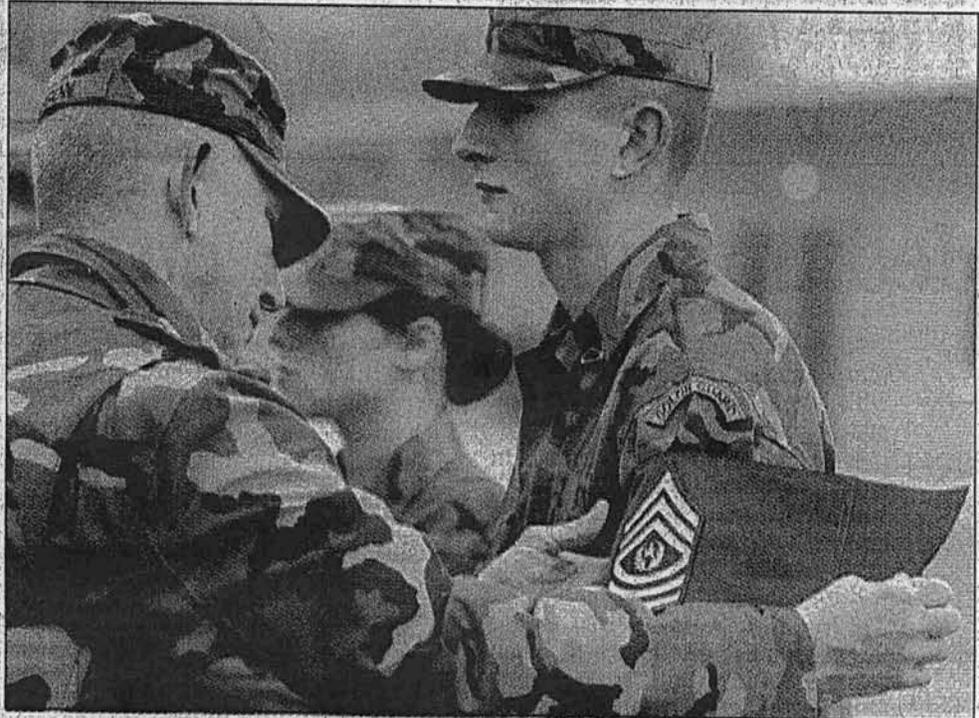
Bigler acknowledges that the program is not right for everyone, but notes that it's a welcome addition to the county's arsenal of education tools and programs. "It's about giving kids the choice," he says, "Because when they make the choice to be a part of something like this, they're more willing to make the effort."

So as the students gather together with their families in Downtown Modesto, they're not just celebrating their transformation to a Cadet or a high school graduate, but to a new person. And the Stanislaus Military Academy hopes they can help kids become new people for years to come.

For more information, visit [stance.org/SCOE/career-altEd](http://stance.org/SCOE/career-altEd).

# CADETS SHOW THEIR STUFF

*The Stanislaus Military Academy opened its doors to the public Monday. It's a growing campus with 60 students, up from 17 at the start of the school year. The Stanislaus County Office of Education alternative education programs refer students to the academy, which is at the John B. Allard School in Turlock. At top right, Capt. Raymond Gibson attaches the insignia for the rank of first captain of cadets to Dominick Rufo, 17, of Turlock during the day's ceremonies. Sheriff Adam Christianson gave cadets commemorative coins, far right. At right, new cadets in street clothes watch as cadets run by at the end of ceremonies.*



For additional photos, go to [www.modbee.com/photos](http://www.modbee.com/photos).

PHOTOS BY DARRYL BUSH  
• [dbush@modbee.com](mailto:dbush@modbee.com)

