

The YOUNG MARINES

~AT A GLANCE



Mission

The mission of the Young Marines is to positively impact America's future by providing quality youth development programs for boys and girls, that nurtures and develops its members into responsible citizens who enjoy and promote a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

Who we are

The Young Marines is a youth education and service programs for boys and girls, ages 8 through completion of high school. The Young Marines promotes the mental, moral, and physical development of its members. The program focuses on character building, leadership, and promotes a healthy, drug-free lifestyle. The Young Marines is the official youth program of the U.S. Marine Corps and the focal point for the Marine Corps' Youth Drug Demand Reduction efforts.

Fast Facts

The Young Marines was founded in 1958, in Waterbury, CT by members of the Marine Corps League

Chartered by Congress in 1965

The Young Marines is the official Youth Drug Demand Reduction Program of the United States Marine Corps

A proud member of the Military, Veterans, and Patriotic Service Organizations of America since 2000

The Department of Defense awarded the Young Marines the very first Fulcrum Shield Award for "Excellence in Youth Anti-Drug Programs" in 2001

Proud member of America's Promise since 2001

The Young Marines is a 501c(3) youth educational organization. All donations are tax deductible.

Membership

The Young Marines is open to all youth ages 8 through completion of high school. The only membership requirement is that the youth must be in good standing at school. Since the Young Marines' humble beginnings, in 1958, with one unit and a handful of boys, the organization has grown to 238 units with over 19,000 youth and 2,900 adult volunteers in 36 states, the District of Columbia, and Japan.

The greatest period of growth has come in the last six years, where the program grew from just 32 units with barely 1,000 Young Marines to its present strength. The Young Marines program continues to grow, with new units being added to the rolls each month.

"What I get most out of the Young Marines is Pride and Teamwork. These two really go together in my book."

~Young Marine SSgt. N. Allen, Columbia River Young Marines

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Our Volunteers

Young Marine units are community-based programs lead by dedicated adult volunteers. Many of these volunteers are former, retired, active duty, or reserve Marines who believe passionately that the values they learned as Marines had a positive affect on them. It is through these caring adults that Young Marines learn the inner values of *Honor, Courage and Commitment*. They volunteer their time and effort to pass these values on to youths in their respective communities before other destructive influences take root. Adult volunteers are individually screened by the National Headquarters based on background information and recommendations provided with each person's registration.

Nearly 3,000 adult volunteers serve at all levels throughout the Young Marines organization

Training

Upon joining a local Young Marine unit, youth undergo a 26-hour orientation program, generally spread out over several weekly meetings. This orientation program is affectionately called "Boot Camp." The youth learn general subjects such as history, customs and courtesies, close order drill, physical fitness, and military rank structure. After graduating from Young Marine "Boot Camp", the youth have the opportunity to learn more new skills, earn rank, wear the Young Marine uniform and work toward ribbon awards. Young Marines earn ribbons for achievement in areas such as leadership, community service, swimming, academic excellence, first aid and drug resistance education.

National Programs

During the summer months, Young Marines have the opportunity to attend the Young Marines National Summer Programs of: Adventures, Challenges, Encampments, and Schools (SPACES). Schools consist of Junior, Senior and Advanced Leadership courses. Adventures, such as the Civil War Adventure, have a historical emphasis and are designed with the younger child in mind. In contrast, older Young Marines can participate in Challenges. Challenges consist of training in areas such as survival skills, wilderness training, and water-based activities. Young Marine Encampments provide the opportunity for Young Marines of all ages to gather together and train as a large unit of up to 700 youth at a time. Over 3,000 Young Marines participate in the SPACES programs each year.

The Young Marines is the first recipient of the Fulcrum Shield Award for Excellence in Youth Anti-Drug Programs

Awards

The Young Marines received the Department of Defense's first annual Fulcrum Shield Award for Excellence in Youth Anti-Drug Programs. The award recognizes military-affiliated youth organizations around the world that have made concerted efforts at spreading the anti-drug messages throughout their communities. We were selected for this prestigious award for our hard work in Drug Demand Reduction activities and efforts nationwide.

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Publications

The Young Marines publishes its own magazine, the *Young Marine Esprit*. The *Young Marine Esprit* is distributed free of charge to all registered youth and adults four times annually. The magazine features stories and photos of unit activities, letters to the editor, news from Young Marine National Headquarters, articles on living a healthy drug-free lifestyle, games, puzzles, and a letter from the National Executive Director.

In addition to the *Young Marine Esprit*, National Headquarters produces guidebooks for Young Marines, a Registered Adult Manual, an Awards Manual, New Unit Starter Kits and Young Marine Veterans Appreciation Week toolkits.

Chester, the official mascot of the Young Marines

In 2002, the Young Marines welcomed a very special member to its ranks, *Chester* the bulldog. *Chester* enjoys all the benefits of Young Marine membership such as the opportunity to earn rank and ribbons, wear the Young Marine uniform, and a free subscription to the *Young Marine Esprit* magazine.



"Chester", the official mascot of the Young Marines

Alliance for Youth with America's Promise

In 2001, the Young Marines declared itself an official Partner of America's Promise. The Young Marines joins over 500 organizations nationwide that share the vision of America's Promise, *We can make a difference for our kids*. The Young Marines organization is committed to the Five Promises of providing; *Caring Adults, Safe Places, A Healthy Start, Marketable Skills and Opportunities to Serve*.

Young Marine of the Year

It is one of the highest honors the Young Marines program can pay to a Young Marine in recognition for their outstanding participation, contribution, and personal achievement. It's the National Young Marine of the Year Award. Each year, regional commanders from across the nation are asked for their recommendations for Young Marine of the Year. The six youth that are nominated for the award are granted \$500 scholarships towards their post-high school education. The one member who is chosen by the Board of Directors as the National Young Marine of the Year is awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.

The Young Marine of the Year must be a proven leader who can speak to large groups of adults about the Young Marines program. In other words, be a positive and influential representative of the Young Marines organization. The National Young Marine of the Year is expected to advise the National Executive Director and the Board of Directors on issues important to Young Marines, travel throughout the United States and abroad, chair the annual Young Marines Leadership conference and represent the organization at various national events and activities.