

Maybe this place needs to die. Maybe it needs to stop rather than keep on going in the direction that is. This school was built on a brotherhood, that is why the networking and fellowship of alumni is so strong. That ring represents the bond that you had and will have for years to come between you and your classmates. All the late nights shining, physical training, studying knob knowledge, and being exhausted every waking minute for 9 months creates a bond between you and your brothers who went through hell with you that nothing in the world can break. A Navy Seal of all people should know that.

Our brotherhood has almost successfully been taken away from us and I'm afraid in years to come, the alumni of the classes who were under this Nazi-like administration will bring the Citadel reputation to the grave. If a change is not made, that fear will become reality. It is not longer teaching us to have each other's backs anymore. The school and administration is now teaching everyone to look out only for themselves and not the man or woman next to you. It is teaching everyone to be selfish and to screw over anyone for their benefit. Our so called "leaders," and I'm not talking on the cadet level, are stabbing us in the backs as much as they can. We have certain Tac officers and superiors who find joy in punishing cadets for petty offenses and issue maximum punishments for whatever it may be. I know because I have had personal experience, while on guard, with a Tac making jokes about how Mrs. Redmond's computer smoking from all the white slips he was going to write (he was making a joke but being completely serious). If a cadet writes his/her own white slip, they white out the punishment and raise it to a higher offense after the cadet has already signed it without him/her knowing. They make their own rules and when a rule isn't in the regulations, it is changed later on in the near future. That is not leadership, that is a tyrannical way of governing. Jenkin's Hall, with the exception of a few, is not a ran by true principle leaders and/or a true representation of Citadel men and women.

If this is what our school has come to and continues to be, I no longer want part in it.

I do not want to be a part of something who lure's people in with what used to be true slogans of Honor, Duty, Respect, and Building Principle Leaders. It has veered so far from those beliefs, but still repeats them over and over again as if they want to believe that they are still teaching cadets those beliefs. We become principle leaders and develop Honor, Duty, and Respect from the 4th class system and rank structure in the later years. You can't force these mindsets into cadets without any reinforcement and that is exactly what the school is currently trying to do. You have to break a person down and build them back up with these mindsets as the foundations to create principle leaders. Again, a Navy Seal should know this more than anyone. These beliefs that the school preaches are the goal, however, it is an indirect goal that will eventually come with the right leadership. It is our jobs as cadets, leaders in the making, to reinforce these concepts into the new freshmen but the administration will not let us do so because apparently everything within training is "hazing."

The school is now teaching cadets that it is ok to do just enough to get by and not exceed the standard, yet they preach about "meeting the high standard" all the time. In a meeting we had with the commandant and sergeant major, it was made clear to us the goal of the commandant, which as been apparent all year. The goal is to not try to run the weak ones out. We are supposed to try to lead and make them want to exceed; but if they don't, let them do what they want. Is that any way you would lead or train troops? Would you train Navy Seals like that? If they don't want to do what they are told then let them be. No, they would be forced to leave within the first minutes of training. The same ideas apply at The Citadel. Navy Seals are the elite of the elite and that is how I view The Citadel, well how I used to view it. If a person cannot meet the high standards, then they don't belong here. That is one of the many reasons to how and why Citadel cadets and alumni have the reputation that they do. I see so many freshmen walking around as if they run the school. They snicker in our faces as we attempt to train and inspect them, blatantly disrespect us, and talk back to us. I know first hand because the knobs I am currently babysitting do this to me. We have no control over it and they know it because again, apparently everything within training is "hazing." A prime example of the knob class of 2018, the video of the female knob who was talking back to an upperclassmen. As they always do, the school shoved it under the rug and punished the cadet for "discredit to The Citadel." These men and women will be in the real world one day as alumni representing the school in a way just how they acted as cadets.

Whether the superiors of the school believe it or not, or how much the school tries to cover it up from the public, knob year is truly dead and from the looks of it, has a slim shot of being brought back because of the fear of "The Citadel cant survive a major hazing violation" (Poluso). The fear of this idea has dug the school its grave and is rapidly lowering it down in it. So maybe the school does need to be put out of its misery instead of continuing to live a lie as it is currently doing. As a wise grad/Tac put it "I'd rather this school die with tradition than keep on going like it is." If we don't put things back to the way they need to be, in a few years to come, this once prestigious institution will be like every other military college.

As I say these things above, I am speaking for the majority of the corps, the majority who believe in the school and what it teaches, or should I say used to teach.

-Cadet (Class of 2016)