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MEDIA ALERT

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Ark. Gov. to speak, present certificates at Youth Challenge Dec. 12. *~ 104 cadets mark completion of 5.5-month Nat'l Guard course at Levy Church of Christ*

WHO: Arkansas Youth Challenge Cadets

WHAT: Will graduate from a 5.5-month National Guard course

WHEN: Thursday, Dec. 12., at 10 a.m.

WHERE: Levy Church of Christ, 5124 Camp Robinson Rd., North Little Rock, Ark.

WHY: Youth Challenge is a state and federally funded program that focuses cadets on eight core components: leadership and followership, responsible citizenship, academic excellence, job skills, life coping skills, health and hygiene, service to community, and physical fitness. Congress created the National Guard Youth Challenge Program, a civilian youth opportunities program, and authorized the Secretary of Defense to use the National Guard Bureau to conduct the program for at-risk youth. The Arkansas Youth Challenge Program is administered by the Arkansas Department of Military Affairs. Youth Challenge is located on Camp Joseph T. Robinson in North Little Rock. The Arkansas Youth Challenge Program is one of the original 4 pilot programs established in 1993 and offers youth the opportunity to change the direction of their lives and develop the strength of character and life skills necessary to become successful, responsible citizens. Once cadets graduate, they automatically enter a 1-year follow-on post-residential phase where they meet routinely with trained mentors that live in or near the cadet's hometown community. For more information about Youth Challenge, visit www.aryouthchallenge.com.