

## Project Case Study:

# Dormitory Furniture for D.C. National Guard's Capital Guardian Youth ChalleNGe Academy



**Project Name** Capital Guardian Youth ChalleNGe Academy

**Project Location** Oak Hill Campus, Laurel, MD

**Project Size** Two dormitories, male and female, 176 total beds

**Building Type** Community-based residential program for at-risk youth

**Project Team** Norix Group, Inc.

District of Columbia National Guard

District of Columbia Department of General Services

**Product List** Titan® Series Room Furniture

ComfortShield® Mattresses

Progress Series Seating



# CASE STUDY

## DESCRIPTION:

The National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program is a community-based program that leads, trains and mentors at-risk youth in the District of Columbia. The award-winning program has been recognized as one of the nation's most effective preventative programs for youth at-risk for substance abuse, delinquency and criminal activity.

The residential program is based at the District of Columbia Capital Guardian Youth ChalleNGe Academy's Oak Hill Campus in Laurel, Maryland. The 30-acre, 14-building campus has undergone substantial improvements, including a complete dormitory renovation in 2013.



## OVERALL PROJECT GOAL / PHILOSOPHY

Youth ChalleNGe administrators sought to create a comfortable – yet structured – environment in the new dormitories, consistent with the disciplined 22 week program. Program candidates first complete a two week acclimation period, providing them an opportunity to adjust to the physical, mental and social discipline of the program. Core components of the program include life-coping skills, academic excellence, physical fitness and leadership. Successful candidates then become Cadets in the 20 week residential program, which includes academic study, regimented daily activities and community service. Cadets learn close order drill and are expected to maintain the program's code of conduct. The academic program prepares Cadets for the G.E.D. exam. Cadets develop a Life Plan (goals) and are matched with a mentor to support them during – and after – the residential program.

**Furnishings Goal:** The objective was to create an environment conducive to learning, consistent with Military-style cadet training conducted in the National Guard program. The newly renovated facility would serve male and female adolescents, 16-18 years of age, many with behavioral issues.

**Safety/Security Goal:** Furniture that was structurally robust and tamper resistant.

**Functional Goal:** Furniture that was extremely durable, with surfaces that are easy to clean and maintain.

## SELECTION PROCESS:

During the design phase, consultative sales specialists Joe Eustace and David MacKinnon presented furniture recommendations to Director R. Owen Johnson Jr., Youth Program Coordinator; Mr. Raynald Blackwell and associates from the Capital Guardian Youth ChalleNGe Program. This included viewing the product in a mobile showroom that Eustace and MacKinnon brought to the site, and a room mock-up that was evaluated at DC National Guard HQ's. Specifications were established with Titan® Series steel dormitory furniture as the basis of design. Titan® Series products – proven successful in several U.S. Army training facilities - were selected because of their extreme durability, and appropriateness for the Cadet-style program setting. The Norix professional installation team installed the furnishings in the summer of 2013.

## THE RESULT:

The newly renovated Youth ChalleNGe Academy opened on July 10, 2013. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was hosted by Maj. Gen. Errol R. Schwartz, commanding general of the District of Columbia National Guard. The ceremony included distinguished guests such as Mayor Vincent Gray and Louisiana Senator Mary Landrieu. The new facility established an environment conducive to the goals of the Youth ChalleNGe program – to chart the Cadets’ path to responsibility and contribution to their community. “This academy is a new lease on life for the youth of DC, but also for the Oak Hill facility,” Maj. Gen. Schwartz said at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. “This campus was once a jail and once sat abandoned. Now hundreds of DC youth will find a second chance to put their lives on track towards college, work and productive citizenship.”

75% of program graduates receive their high school diploma, GED or return to high school. 90% of program graduates join the workforce, the military or continue their education. More than 100,000 at-risk youths have graduated from the Youth ChalleNGe program since its inception in 1993.

The National Guard operates 33 separate Youth Challenge Programs in 27 states and Puerto Rico.

## ABOUT NORIX GROUP:

For more than 30 years Norix has provided secure furnishings and fixtures for every application. The product line has expanded to include industries and environments such as corrections, behavioral healthcare, transportation, educational institutions, fire/police stations, commercial facilities and military installations. All furniture is designed for safety, security and extreme durability. Norix intensive-use furniture is extraordinary by design, surpassing industry standards for strength, safety and long-term performance. The privately held company is headquartered in West Chicago, IL with sales representatives and dealers throughout the U.S. In 2012, Norix launched Safe Environments a news and information blog serving architects, designers, administrators, and facility managers involved in the design, construction, and operation of challenging environments. For more information, call 800-234-4900 or visit: [www.norix.com](http://www.norix.com).



[Norix Blog](#)



**“This campus was once a jail and once sat abandoned. Now hundreds of DC youth will find a second chance to put their lives on track towards college, work and productive citizenship.”**

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

### National Guard Youth Challenge program

<http://www.ngycp.org/site/>

### District of Columbia Youth ChalleNGe Program

<http://www.ngycp.org/site/state/dc/>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Capital-Guardian-Youth-ChalleNGe-Program/192204007457904>

<http://www.dcnycf.org/donate.shtml>

## NEWS ARTICLE & VIDEO:

<http://mayor.dc.gov/release/mayor-gray-and-dc-national-guard-leaders-cut-ribbon-new-youth-challenge-academy-oak-hill>

[http://article.wn.com/view/2013/07/10/The\\_DCYouth\\_ChalleNGe\\_Academy\\_offers\\_an\\_alternative\\_for\\_high/#/video](http://article.wn.com/view/2013/07/10/The_DCYouth_ChalleNGe_Academy_offers_an_alternative_for_high/#/video)