

The Bluffton Sun



Serving the smiling faces, beautiful places of greater Bluffton and Okatie

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Club members graduate from Bluffton Explorers life program

June 28 was a special day for a group of local young people who graduated from the Boys & Girls Club of Bluffton Explorers Learning for Life Program.

The 21 cadets marched in the ceremony at the Bluffton Police Department as their parents and families watched.

This program was not easy to complete.

For two weeks, the students, ages 12 to 18, took part in a strict and regimented boot camp from 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. The boot camp included daily physical training, drill and ceremony practice, as well as class time, led by volunteers from the Bluffton Police Department and Fraternal Order of Police Lowcountry Lodge 16.

Graduates were recognized with special awards, as well as a few words of wisdom from guest speaker Chief Christopher Chapmond of the Bluffton Police Department. "I want to talk to you about courage," said Chapmond. "You're going to be faced with things throughout your life where you're going



COURTESY BLUFFTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Graduates of the Bluffton Explorers Learning for Life Program pose with Bluffton Police Chief Chris Chapmond at graduation ceremonies June 28 at BPD.

to have to have courage to do the right thing. It's not easy doing the right thing. Sometimes doing the right thing is the hardest thing you can do. So, remain strong. Have courage. Remain strong."

After the ceremony, the graduates and their family members enjoyed a cookout prepared by members of the Bluffton Police Department.

The Explorers Learning for Life pro-

gram is an education and career development program, in partnership with the Bluffton Police Department, that is designed to enhance the lives of teens by exposing them to careers in law enforcement, character-building volunteer work, and discipline through routine physical training.

Established in 2007, the program has been a platform from which countless young adults have launched successful careers in law enforcement, public safety, military, criminal justice and other fields at local, county, state and federal levels.

During the school year, Bluffton police officers teach one-hour classes every Wednesday at the department. During these classes, officers use interactive training techniques to teach about law and police procedures, safety and the importance of being a good citizen.

This program is possible thanks to funding provided by the Berkeley Hall Charitable Foundation and Hampton Lake Tiger Bass Race.