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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 19, 2010

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## MDRC RELEASES INTERIM RESULTS ON THE NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH CHALLENGE PROGRAM NOTING POSITIVE FINDINGS

**The ongoing study reports high school dropouts are more likely to get their diploma or GED by participating in the ChalleNGe Program.**

*The ChalleNGe Program is designed to “reclaim the lives of at-risk youth” who have dropped out of high school and give them the skills and values to succeed as adults.*

Alexandria, VA, July 19, 2010 – MDRC, a prestigious nonprofit, nonpartisan policy research organization, released positive interim results from the ongoing 36 month evaluation on the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program, a high school dropout program. The report, “Making the Transition: Interim Results of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Evaluation,” concludes that participants were more likely to earn their GED or high school diploma, engage in productive activities, and less likely to be convicted of a crime than high school dropouts that did not participate in the ChalleNGe Program 21 months into the study.

“Making the Transition” is the second report in the study performed by MDRC and was released in May, 2010. It follows the first report, “Reengaging High School Dropouts: Early Results of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program Evaluation,” which was released February, 2009. A final evaluation should be available at the end of 2010. Full reports are available at [mdrc.org](http://mdrc.org).

The ongoing evaluation follows a group of 3,000 high school dropouts who applied to ten of the ChalleNGe Programs (CA, FL, GA, IL, MI, MS, NC, NM, TS, and WI) during 2005 - 2006. The applicants were split into two groups, accepted and unaccepted, also known as the control group. The evaluation follows progress of each group, and measures how attending, or not attending, the ChalleNGe Program has affected their lives.

This interim report comes after the 2009 vote by Congress to increase the share of program costs that can be paid by the U.S. Department of Defense, further assisting states in economic turmoil.

The evaluation is funded by U.S. Department of Defense and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the MCI Foundation, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

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The ChalleNGe Program is a 17 month program that offers youths between the ages of 16 and 18 who have dropped out of (or been expelled from) school, are unemployed, drug-free, and not heavily involved with the justice system the opportunity to get their high school diploma or GED while learning the skills necessary to succeed. The National Guard Bureau currently operates 32 programs in 27 states and Puerto Rico.

## About The National Guard Youth Foundation

The mission of the National Guard Youth Foundation is to foster program awareness, advocate for the program goals and funding, and provide scholarships, training and workforce transition assistance to the graduates of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program. To learn more about the ChalleNGe Program and its Cadets, please visit our website at [www.ngyf.org](http://www.ngyf.org).

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