

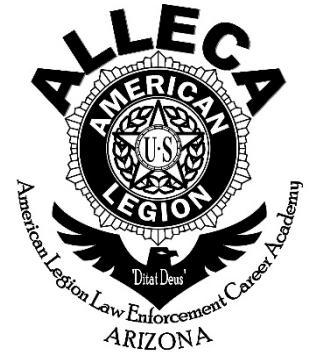
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To: CMDR. Gary Vaughn, American Legion, Department of Arizona

From: Matthew Griffis, ALLECA Director

Reference: ALLECA FINAL REPORT 2026

2026 American Legion Law Enforcement Career Academy (ALLECA)



Executive Summary



The 2026 American Legion Law Enforcement Career Academy (ALLECA) was conducted from June 6–13, 2026, at Emmanuel Pines Camp in Prescott, Arizona. This year marked the 45th anniversary of the academy, which was established in 1981 to provide Arizona youth with an immersive experience in law enforcement leadership, citizenship, discipline, teamwork, and career exploration.

The academy successfully hosted 35 cadets from throughout Arizona, consisting of 25 male cadets and 10 female cadets. ALLECA continues to provide a unique opportunity for young people to experience the challenges and rewards of law enforcement service while developing personal responsibility, integrity, leadership, and respect for others.

Academy Staff

The academy was staffed by 17 highly trained law enforcement professionals representing the Arizona Department of Public Safety, Peoria Police Department, Phoenix Police Department, and Tucson Police Department. Their commitment and dedication were instrumental in delivering a safe, professional, and educational experience for all cadets.

Additionally, seven former ALLECA graduates returned to serve as Cadet Advisors, providing mentorship and guidance throughout the week. Their participation demonstrated the lasting impact of the program and reinforced the academy's tradition of leadership development.

Medical services were provided by a Board-Certified Nurse Practitioner who served as the Camp Medic. Medical support was available throughout the week and ensured the health and well-being of both cadets and staff.

Cadet Leadership and Development

Cadets were assigned to squads and provided opportunities to develop leadership skills through positions such as Squad Leader, Class President, and Guide-on. The Guide-on was responsible for carrying the ALLECA class flag and representing the class during official movements and ceremonies.

Throughout the academy, cadets received instruction emphasizing:

- Respect for the American flag and national heritage
- Drill and marching procedures
- Professional conduct and personal responsibility
- Teamwork and leadership
- Honor and respect toward staff and fellow cadets

These lessons reinforced the values that are essential in law enforcement and public service professions.

Physical Fitness and Personal Responsibility

Cadets were encouraged to prepare physically prior to arrival and participated in a comprehensive physical fitness program throughout the week.

Program requirements included:

- Initial physical fitness assessment
- Daily physical fitness training
- Final physical fitness assessment prior to graduation

Cadets were also responsible for maintaining military-style standards within the residence halls, including:

- Bed-making and room inspections
- Uniform maintenance and appearance
- Facility cleaning assignments
- Daily chores and squad responsibilities

These activities promoted accountability, discipline, and attention to detail.

Training Program

The daily schedule was structured to maximize learning opportunities and maintain a high level of engagement. Activities began early each morning and continued through the evening, incorporating both classroom instruction and practical exercises.

Daily activities included:

- Physical fitness training
- Flag raising and lowering ceremonies
- Drill and marching
- Squad meetings and mentoring sessions
- Uniform and boot maintenance
- Classroom instruction
- Practical law enforcement exercises

Cadets participated in hands-on training that included air-soft weapon handling, defensive tactics, scenario-based exercises, and leadership development activities.

Classroom Instruction

Cadets received instruction from experienced law enforcement professionals in a variety of subjects, including:

- Introduction to First Aid
- DUI and the Underage Driver
- Citizenship and Americanism
- Traffic Stops
- Bomb Squad Operations
- Arizona Department of Public Safety SWAT Operations
- Dangers of Distracted Driving
- Bullying Awareness and Prevention
- Undercover Investigations
- Building Entry Techniques

- Active Shooter Response
- High-Risk Vehicle Stops
- Air-Soft Shooting Competition
- Narcotics Investigations
- Defensive Tactics
- Career Development and Professional Growth

The curriculum was designed to expose cadets to numerous aspects of modern law enforcement while emphasizing decision-making, communication, leadership, and public service.

Cadet Attendance

Prior to the start of the academy, 53 cadets were registered to attend.

Attendance results were as follows:

Category	Number
Registered Cadets	53
Cadets Starting Academy	36
Cadets Graduating Academy	34

One cadet was unable to complete the academy due to a medical condition, and one cadet was sent home for an integrity violation.

The academy achieved a graduation rate of 94.4% for cadets who began the program.

Graduation Ceremony

The academy concluded on June 13, 2026, with a formal graduation ceremony attended by family members, academy staff, and supporters. Cadets were presented to their families and recognized for successfully completing the program.

Certificates of Graduation were awarded to all graduating cadets in recognition of their dedication, perseverance, and achievement throughout the week.

Financial Summary

Camp Fees

The 2026 academy incurred a camp fee of **\$41,930.00**, representing an increase of **\$2,969.00** compared to 2025.

Facility and Equipment Improvements

To improve the quality of the cadet experience and replace aging equipment, several significant purchases were made during 2026.

New Bed Linens and Blankets

- Replacement of bedding that had been in service for more than 20 years.
- Total Cost: **\$2,338.67**

Physical Training Gear Program

- PT uniforms purchased for all cadets and rotated through daily laundering.
- Reduced financial burden on participating families.
- Included inventory for future academy classes of 50+ cadets.
- Included two sets of uniform boots and four pairs of running shoes for cadets with financial need.
- Total Cost: **\$11,929.85**

Training and Scenario Equipment

- Individual flashlights for all cadets
- Six full-face protective masks
- Fifteen tactical rail-mounted LED lights for night training scenarios
- Total Cost: **\$1,459.86**

Total Program Cost

Including camp fees, medical supplies, training equipment, uniforms, and operational expenses, the total cost of conducting ALLECA 2026 was:

\$64,531.47

This represents an increase of **\$22,533.71** compared to ALLECA 2025.

The 2026 American Legion Law Enforcement Career Academy (ALLECA) successfully provided a comprehensive law enforcement/military career development experience for 35 cadets from across Arizona. The total program cost for the 2026 academy was approximately **\$64,000**, resulting in a per-cadet cost of approximately **\$1,800**.

For the 2027 ALLECA program, projected operating expenses are estimated at **\$60,000**, reflecting continued efforts to maximize program efficiency while maintaining the high-quality training and leadership development standards that have defined the academy for more than four decades.

A key factor in reducing the overall cost per participant is increasing cadet enrollment. Based on the projected 2027 budget, the estimated cost per cadet is as follows:

Cadet Enrollment Projected Total Cost Cost Per Cadet

50 Cadets	\$60,000	\$1,200
55 Cadets	\$60,000	\$1,100
60 Cadets	\$60,000	\$1,000

These projections demonstrate the significant economies of scale achieved through increased enrollment. Expanding participation from 35 cadets in 2026 to 50–60 cadets in 2027 would reduce the per-cadet cost by approximately **33% to 44%**, while allowing the academy to positively impact a greater number of future law enforcement professionals.

Continued investment in ALLECA provides substantial value by developing leadership, discipline, teamwork, and career awareness among Arizona's youth. Increasing enrollment for the 2027 academy will not only improve cost efficiency but also expand the program's reach and long-term benefit to participating communities and the law enforcement profession.

Evidence of Program Effectiveness – 2026 American Legion Law Enforcement Career Academy (ALLECA)

The effectiveness of the 2026 American Legion Law Enforcement Career Academy (ALLECA) is best demonstrated through the feedback received from cadets and their families following the completion of the program. Beyond providing participants with exposure to careers in law enforcement, ALLECA seeks to develop leadership, discipline, teamwork, self-confidence, and a greater appreciation for public service. Feedback from parents and guardians consistently reflects the positive and lasting impact the academy has on both participants and their families.

Following the conclusion of the 2026 academy, Michele Irwin, parent of Cadet Jackson Irwin, provided the following unsolicited feedback regarding her family's experience:

“Like many other families, we were unsure, scared and nervous, but still took that first step. I don’t have any law enforcement or military background, so your support helped ease my ‘overprotective mom’ fears. The daily pictures/videos were extremely helpful.”

“I can already see the positive impact ALLECA has had on Jackson.”

“This experience was not only rewarding for Jackson, it impacted us as a family.”

Ms. Irwin's comments highlight several key indicators of program success. First, they demonstrate the academy's commitment to maintaining strong communication with

families throughout the week-long program, helping parents remain engaged and informed while their cadets participate in a challenging and transformative environment.

Second, her observation that she could already see a positive impact on her son immediately following graduation reflects the academy's ability to foster personal growth, maturity, self-discipline, and leadership development in a relatively short period of time. Such feedback is consistent with the academy's mission to challenge young adults, build confidence, and expose them to the values and expectations associated with careers in law enforcement and public service.

Finally, Ms. Irwin's statement that the experience positively impacted the entire family demonstrates the broader influence of the program. ALLECA not only benefits individual cadets but also strengthens family understanding of leadership, service, accountability, and personal achievement. The emotional connection expressed by parents during and after the program serves as a powerful measure of the academy's effectiveness and long-term value.

Testimonials such as this provide compelling evidence that ALLECA continues to achieve its mission of developing future leaders while creating meaningful and lasting experiences for Arizona youth and their families. The positive outcomes observed by parents, combined with cadet participation, graduation rates, and continued interest in public service careers, demonstrate the enduring success and community impact of the American Legion Law Enforcement Career Academy.

Conclusion

The 2026 American Legion Law Enforcement Career Academy successfully fulfilled its mission of educating, mentoring, and inspiring Arizona youth through a structured and challenging law enforcement career exploration program.

The academy provided participants with valuable instruction in leadership, citizenship, teamwork, physical fitness, personal responsibility, and career development. Through the efforts of dedicated law enforcement professionals, alumni advisors, medical personnel, and volunteers, cadets experienced a safe and rewarding environment that promoted personal growth and community service.

As ALLECA celebrates its 45th year of operation, the program continues to positively impact young people across Arizona and remains an important investment in the future leaders of our communities.

2027 ALLECA Program Budget Projection

The projected budget for the 2027 program reflects the continued commitment to providing a safe, effective, and high-quality training experience for up to 60 cadets while ensuring the long-term sustainability of program operations. Based on current operational requirements

and anticipated participant enrollment, the total projected cost for the 2027 program is estimated at a minimum of \$55,000.

Core program expenses are projected to total approximately \$55,000 and include camp rental fees, cadet uniforms, administrative expenses, camp supplies, medical supplies, laundry services, and hydration resources, including bottled water and Gatorade. These expenditures represent the essential costs associated with operating the program and maintaining a safe and productive learning environment for all participants.

An additional capital expenditure under consideration for 2027 is the purchase of a 40-foot Conex storage container to provide secure, on-site storage for camp equipment and supplies. Current market estimates indicate that a used container can be acquired for between \$1,500 and \$4,500, with transportation and delivery costs ranging from approximately \$200 to more than \$600 depending on the delivery location. The addition of a permanent storage solution would reduce the need for repeated transportation of equipment, improve inventory management, and enhance operational readiness for future program years.

Given the camp's location in a region susceptible to seasonal wildfires, the use of a steel Conex container also provides a measure of protection for program assets. While no storage solution can guarantee complete protection from catastrophic fire events, a steel container offers significantly greater resistance to fire exposure than traditional storage structures.

Advantages of Fire-Resistant Conex Storage

- Enhanced protection of camp equipment and supplies from wildfire exposure.
- Reduced risk of loss or damage to uniforms, training materials, medical supplies, and administrative equipment.
- Improved security against theft, vandalism, and weather-related damage.
- Long-term cost savings through preservation of equipment and reduction of replacement costs.
- Centralized storage location improves inventory control and logistical efficiency.
- Durable construction requires minimal maintenance over an extended service life.

Potential Limitations

- Steel containers are fire-resistant but not completely fireproof and may still sustain damage during extreme wildfire conditions.
- Initial purchase, transportation, and site preparation costs increase annual capital expenditures.
- Internal temperatures can become extremely high during Arizona summers, potentially affecting sensitive materials unless appropriate insulation or ventilation is installed.
- Site placement may require coordination with camp management and compliance with local regulations or land-use requirements.

- Large containers may require periodic maintenance to prevent corrosion and ensure continued structural integrity.

Overall, the acquisition of a Conex storage container represents a strategic investment in the long-term preservation and management of program resources. When combined with the projected operational budget, the investment supports improved efficiency, asset protection, and program sustainability while helping ensure that future cadets continue to benefit from a well-equipped and professionally managed training environment.

Respectfully Submitted, Department of Arizona State Convention, June 25, 2026

Matthew Griffis, Director