As an assistant program director for LeadAmerica, I was tasked in the spring with hiring a number of college students and recent college graduates to staff summer leadership conferences for middle and high school students. And knowing The Citadel’s emphasis on community service, I turned to cadets, alumni and active-duty students not only to teach the students, but to fill leadership positions within the staff as well.

LeadAmerica sponsors the Congressional Student Leadership Conference and National Junior Leaders Conference. These conferences are designed to teach academically talented and motivated students the art of leadership specific to their area of academic interest. Experts from their fields speak with the groups, field trips and simulations immerse students in the academics, and the leadership curriculum instructs the students on the science of leadership. Team leaders are college students, recent college graduates or graduate students. Their primary duties are to encourage discussions and simulations and to assist in teaching. Supervising students is naturally part of the job, but every opportunity for interaction becomes a learning environment whether students are in the classroom or on a field trip.

Being a team leader is a challenge for most college students, and LeadAmerica strives to hire only the best and most qualified candidates. Team leaders usually arrive at...