



FUTURES

TURN

Dreams

• INTO •

IMPACT

IN THIS ISSUE EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS OPPORTUNITIES AWAIT LIFE IN THE MILITARY

MAKING YOUR MARK

Like many young adults, you're probably thinking about how you can transform your dreams for the future into something real.

Ultimately, what that decision looks like is unique to you, but for those seeking opportunities that can have a positive impact on their communities, their country — or perhaps the world — the Military is an appealing option.

On the following pages, you'll read stories about the rewards of service, including how diverse teams helped these service members accomplish goals and work toward a common belief: making an impact.

As you learn more about the opportunities of military service, ask yourself the same question these young service members did: **How might you make a mark with YOUR future?**

SENIOR AIRMAN
DANIEL TUZOLANA
AIR FORCE

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Faces of SERVICE



EMILY DOWDELL

SERGEANT | ARMY RESERVE

Pashto Cryptologic Linguist

FUN FACT

Serving part time in the Army Reserve allows her to pursue teaching full time in the civilian world. Her favorite subject to teach is math.



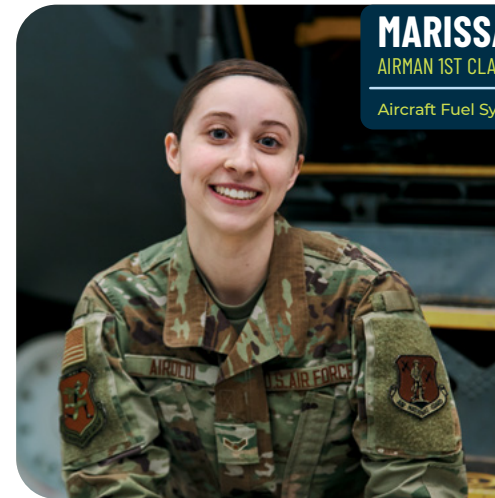
DAVID PEREZ

CAPTAIN | MARINE CORPS

Amphibious Combat Officer

FUN FACT

Capt. Perez is an avid chess player who's always looking to build his collection of custom boards.



MARISSA AIROLDI

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS | AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Aircraft Fuel Systems Specialist

FUN FACT

Marissa is a full-time pre-med student at the University of Connecticut and hopes to become a dentist one day.



CHRISTOPHER MENDELL

SPECIALIST | ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Intelligence Analyst

FUN FACT

Chris is currently a student at Columbia University, but before that he was a successful DJ in high school, performing for the likes of LL Cool J and Flavor Flav.



DOMINIQUE VELAZQUEZ

PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS | NAVY

Hospital Corpsman

FUN FACT

Dominique is a hip-hop dancer and has performed in front of thousands of people in competitions across the globe.



ANTHONY PAPPALY

PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS | COAST GUARD

Public Affairs Specialist

FUN FACT

Anthony is a bit of an Instagram star, making comedic videos in and around his New York City apartment.



TRENTON CHING

SPECIALIST 4 | SPACE FORCE

Space Systems Operator

FUN FACT

While stationed in Okinawa, Japan, Trenton had the chance to explore the island, practicing his Japanese with locals and scuba diving.



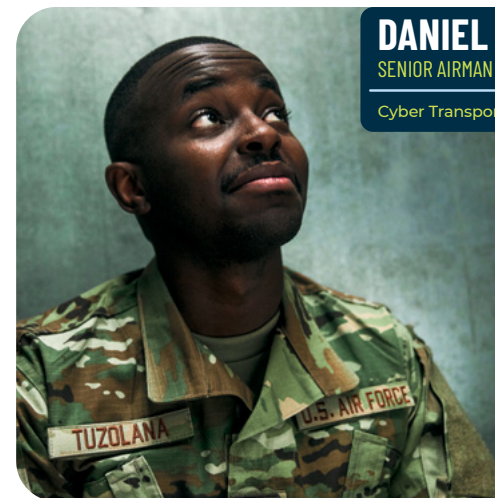
JUNTRANEK POWELL

TECHNICAL SERGEANT | AIR FORCE RESERVE

Commander's Support Staff

FUN FACT

Juntrane's favorite subject in high school was history. She even graduated a year early.



DANIEL TUZOLANA

SENIOR AIRMAN | AIR FORCE

Cyber Transport Systems Technician

FUN FACT

When Daniel was five years old, he and his family moved from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the U.S.



JADA MADSON

STAFF SERGEANT | ARMY

Multiple Launch Rocket Systems Crewmember

FUN FACT

Jada is working toward a degree in exercise science, with the goal of getting a doctorate in physical therapy.



Military 101

Get to Know
Today's Military

How many branches are in the Military?

one military MULTIPLE BRANCHES

BRANCHES

The Military is made up of **six branches**, each with its own specific mission. Together, they offer a variety of ways to serve and **more than 250 different occupations**.

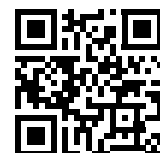
ARMY
MARINE CORPS

NAVY
AIR FORCE

SPACE FORCE
COAST GUARD

Most Service branches have active-duty and part-time components. Part-time duty includes the Reserve and National Guard (see page 7 for more on part-time service).

LEARN MORE ABOUT DIFFERENT WAYS TO SERVE



two distinct paths TO JOINING THE MILITARY:

COMMISSIONING AS AN OFFICER AND ENLISTING

OFFICER

Officers are the managers of the Military, acting in roles that include planning, directing operations and making critical decisions. Positions require a college degree or equivalent. An individual can become an officer by earning a commission through enlisted service, completing Officer Candidate School (OCS), attending one of the highly competitive service academies or participating in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program at more than 1,700 colleges and universities across the U.S.

SERVICE ACADEMIES

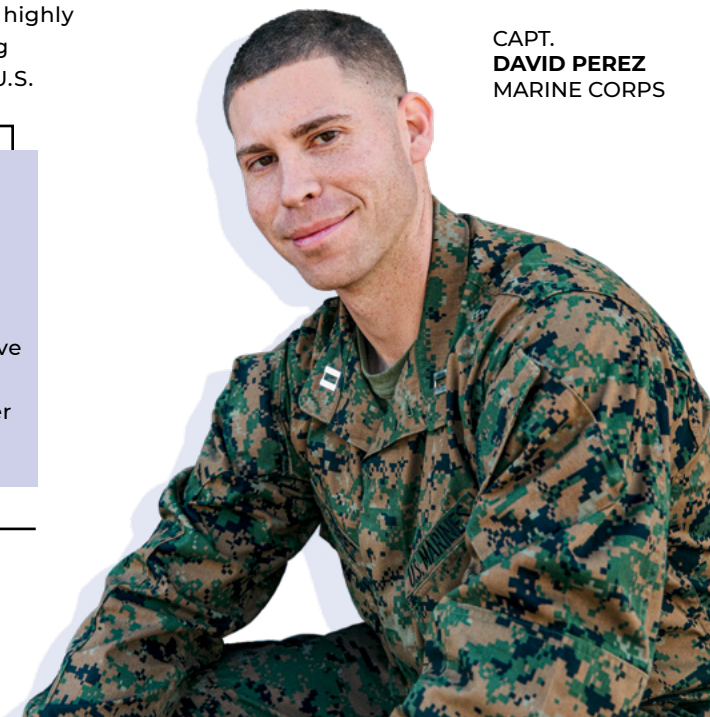
offer a world-class education with fully funded tuition that includes room and board. Graduates receive a Bachelor of Science degree and are commissioned in their respective Service branches.

ROTC PROGRAMS

provide officer training for students during college in exchange for a paid college education. In return, students commit to serve either on active duty or part time in the Guard or Reserve for a set period after graduation, usually five years.

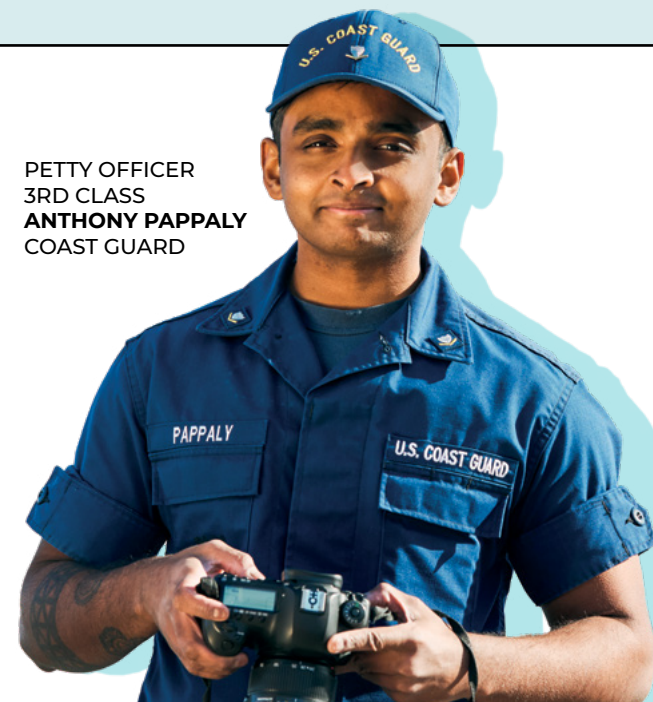
"I've always wanted to help others, so I talked to a recruiter in college. I eventually commissioned as an officer after completing my degree."

CAPT.
DAVID PEREZ
MARINE CORPS



ENLISTED

PETTY OFFICER
3RD CLASS
ANTHONY PAPPALY
COAST GUARD



Enlisted roles require a high school education. There are a variety of enlisted careers, including infantry roles, most of which involve hands-on training that transfers well to the civilian world.

BASIC TRAINING, often known as boot camp, prepares recruits for major elements of service: physical, mental and emotional. It gives service members the basic tools necessary and has the goal of preparing new recruits for success.

"Everyone warns you about boot camp, but you're going through it with people who are experiencing the same thing and you're in it together!"

three ways TO SERVE

ACTIVE DUTY

RESERVE

NATIONAL GUARD

Service can be full time while balancing school, part time while pursuing a career or any combination in between. Discover which way is right for you.

ACTIVE DUTY

FULL-TIME MILITARY SERVICE

Active Duty is a full-time job with set work hours (on duty) and time off (off duty). Being on duty is like a civilian workday, in which you work in an occupational specialty. Off duty is the time when active-duty service members pursue their personal interests such as hobbies, their education or spending time with friends and family.



"This is some once-in-a-lifetime kind of stuff. I've done things in the span of a couple of years that many people will never do in their lifetime."



PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS
DOMINIQUE VELAZQUEZ
NAVY

RESERVE

One-Weekend-a-Month Military Drill*
Two-Weeks-a-Year Military Training*
*minimum

PART-TIME MILITARY SERVICE* FULL-TIME CIVILIAN

Most Services also have a Reserve force made up of service members who typically balance school or full-time civilian careers while serving in the Military. The Reserve components combine an individual's civilian experience with military skills. Reserve members can be called to active duty to support mission needs.



"In the Reserve, there are a lot of opportunities. I can pursue my civilian life and job and still have trainings and experiences and a career in the Military."



SGT.
EMILY DOWDELL
ARMY RESERVE

NATIONAL GUARD

One-Weekend-a-Month Military Drill*
Two-Weeks-a-Year Military Training*
*minimum

PART-TIME MILITARY SERVICE* FULL-TIME CIVILIAN

The Army National Guard and Air National Guard are community-based and report to the governor of their respective state unless called to protect U.S. interests in times of conflict, natural disaster or civil emergencies. They may also be deployed internationally alongside active-duty service members when necessary. Members of the National Guard hold civilian jobs and can attend school while conducting their military training part time.



"I realized the Guard was the best of both worlds! Part-time service fits best with me being a full-time student. I'm able to go to school full time plus help people. I really enjoy doing that."



AIRMAN 1ST CLASS
MARISSA AIROLDI
AIR NATIONAL GUARD

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Full-Time Service with SPC. 4 TRENTON CHING

Curious what serving active duty is like? You can think of it as working full time, typically 40–50 hours a week, sometimes more if the mission requires it and sometimes less for holidays and vacations. Spc. 4 Trenton Ching serves active duty in the Space Force as a space systems operator. He's currently stationed at Peterson Space Force Base in Colorado Springs, Colorado, where he lives in a private on-base dorm room along with other young service members. Here's a quick snapshot of what his active-duty life is like.

7 a.m.

After getting breakfast at the dining facility near his dorm, Trenton returns to his room to get a head start on his engineering assignments for an online class at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University before heading to work.



9 a.m.

Trenton and his team typically start their workday by maintaining a series of antennas that monitor satellite communications for enemy interference that could potentially disrupt the operation of U.S. technology on Earth and in space (see page 24 [Discover What's Possible] to learn more).



4 p.m.

After completing his remaining tasks for the day, Trenton walks to the on-base gym and track for a quick workout.



12 p.m.

Once back inside his team's headquarters, Trenton checks the functionality of the newly adjusted antennas by logging into an electronic warfare system that serves as the central hub for all satellite communications. With everything looking good, Trenton heads to the food court on base for lunch with a few friends.



9 p.m.

Post-workout, Trenton grabs dinner with a few friends back at the dining facility before settling in to play some video games in his room before bed.



“The Military definitely offers a work-life balance. I have a lot of time for myself.”

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Part-Time Service with SPC. CHRIS MENDELL

Members of the Reserve and National Guard typically hold civilian jobs or attend school while serving. They attend military drill a minimum of one weekend a month and annual training two weeks a year. Spc. Chris Mendell is a full-time college student at Columbia University and serves part time as an intelligence analyst in the New York Army National Guard. Chris says this full life gives him a sense of accomplishment and encourages him to keep learning and growing every day.



1 p.m.

After morning lectures and lunch at an on-campus dining hall, Chris typically finds himself in the lab. He's majoring in neuroscience, specifically researching how music can potentially contribute to finding cures for common neurological diseases like Alzheimer's.

FRIDAY

8 a.m.

Like many college students, Chris starts his day with a cup of coffee and breakfast in his apartment before making his way to class. He'll often meet a friend on his way, to catch up.



SATURDAY

7 a.m.

Up early, Chris packs up his rucksack inside the camp's barracks and prepares for the day of training ahead after enjoying a complete breakfast with his fellow Guard members prepared by his unit's culinary specialists.



11 a.m.

Chris leads his fellow Soldiers through a navigation briefing, providing valuable insight into strategic plans of action, weather conditions and more. As an intelligence analyst, it's Chris's job to communicate this crucial information to Soldiers in his unit so that they are as prepared as possible in training and combat.



"Serving part time really allows me to get the best of both worlds."

5 p.m.

As a member of the Columbia University club hockey team, Chris typically kicks off the weekend with some pickup ice hockey with his teammates downtown. Later in the evening, he'll meet up with his Army National Guard unit on Long Island to convoy in military vehicles to Camp Smith, a training site one hour north of the city.



3 p.m.

In the afternoon, Chris takes part in a virtual convoy training meant to mimic a convoy of Humvees in a deployed environment. A typical drill ends on Sunday afternoon, with a return convoy to Long Island after another night spent at the training site. By roughly 6 p.m. on Sunday, Chris is back at his apartment in New York City, ready to dive into some schoolwork in preparation for class on Monday.





LIFELONG LEARNING

Members of the Military are constantly learning through a variety of means, including traditional classroom education, training opportunities and on-the-job instruction

Ever since she had braces in middle school, Airman 1st Class Marissa Airoidi has dreamed of becoming a dentist to encourage others to smile more. She's working toward this goal confidently and effectively with the help of the Military. While Marissa serves part time in the Connecticut Air National Guard, she's also using military-provided Tuition Assistance to pay for her education to become the dentist she always aspired to be.

Marissa is currently working toward her bachelor's degree in biological sciences on a pre-dental track at the University of Connecticut. "Part-time service has been really beneficial for me as a student," she says. "Tuition Assistance allows me to prioritize my finances to set myself up for success in the future."

Marissa is taking advantage of a tuition waiver provided by the Connecticut National Guard Bureau for all state colleges, meaning her higher education isn't costing her anything. She's also taking advantage of the Montgomery GI Bill Selected Reserve, which provides a stipend to pay for her textbooks as well.

Marissa says the ability to focus on her academics and her military career without the financial burden is invaluable. "The benefit of getting to go to school for free made me a better person," she says. "I can focus solely on doing my best work, both in my job and at school, without having to worry about debt or student loans."

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS
MARISSA AIROLDI
AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Marissa (left) studies at home for an upcoming exam. Beyond financial support, Marissa says the Military has taught her better organization and time management skills, strengthening her study habits along the way.

"I will say the biggest benefit I've received is Tuition Assistance. Being able to not only be active duty and get paid a salary, but to also get paid to earn a degree has helped tremendously."

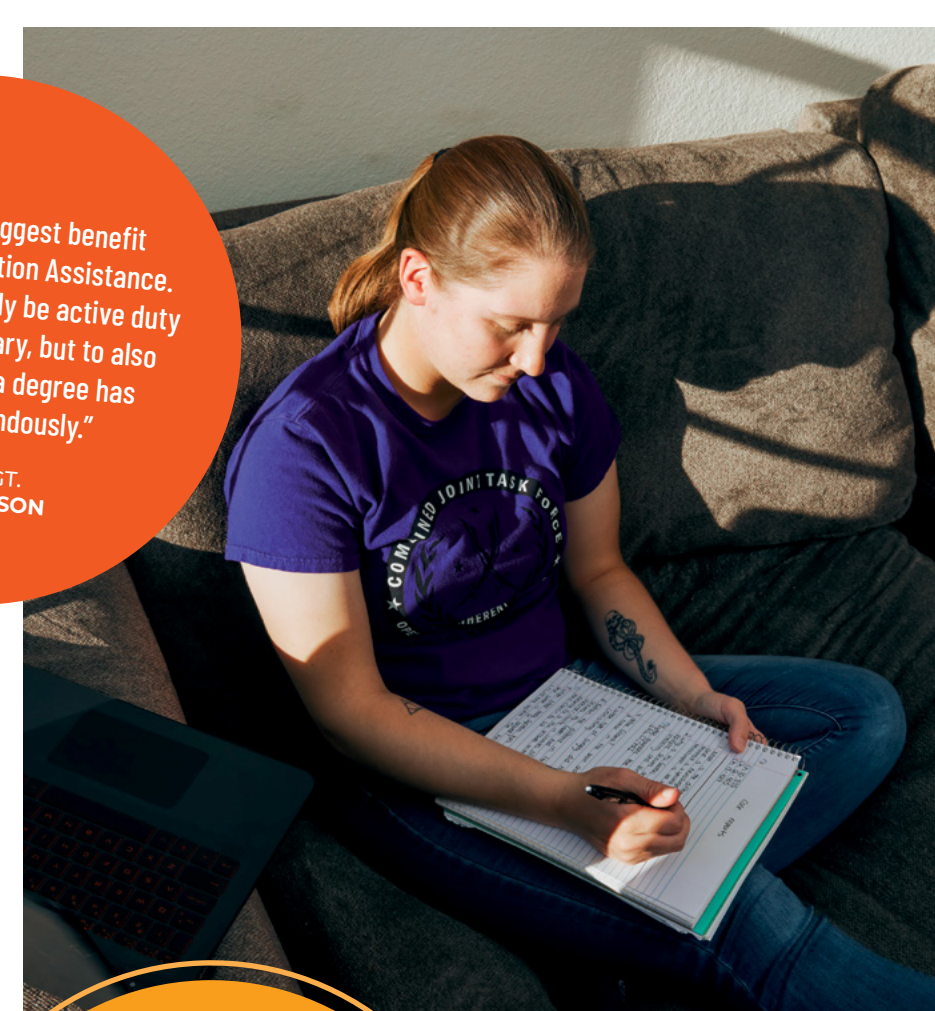
STAFF SGT.
JADA MADSON
ARMY

"Tuition Assistance allows me to focus on becoming the best dentist I can be while not having to stress so much about how to pay for the future I so desperately want."



"A lot of the development that you receive within the Military, the classes that you take, the training that you do, counts toward college credits, which was really impressive to me."

PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS
DOMINIQUE VELAZQUEZ
NAVY



Tuition Assistance covers up to
100%
of tuition or expenses for courses
taken at accredited colleges,
universities, junior colleges or
vocational schools.¹



THE COLLEGE FUND PROGRAM

can be added to benefits received through the Post-9/11 GI Bill for eligible service members.¹

While each Service will determine who qualifies for this program, two basic requirements are that you:

- ✓ Have a high school diploma
- ✓ Be enrolled in the Post-9/11 GI Bill



GI BILL BENEFITS

are available to Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve members. Benefits are based on length of service, can be used to cover all public school in-state tuition and fees and can be shared with family members.¹

EDUCATIONAL

BENEFITS

The Military has several medical-specific financial assistance programs that will pay your tuition and an average of

\$60K
a year to attend classes and study.³



THE STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

may be offered to newly enlisted members to pay off college loans accrued prior to joining the Military. While requirements and opportunities vary by Service, all programs are designed to help recent students manage educational debt.¹



THE POST-9/11 GI BILL

pays all public school in-state tuition and fees and provides a living stipend for housing and an allowance for books and supplies.¹

The federal government provides
\$150 BILLION
per year in grants, work-study programs and federal loans to college students in Active Duty, National Guard or Reserve service.²

“I never have to worry about my daughter having college debt because I transferred my GI Bill benefits to her. It’s just a huge weight off my shoulders.”

CAPT.
DAVID PEREZ
MARINE CORPS



FAST FACT

In addition to the financial benefits above, the Defense Department and Military Services have many programs that work with colleges and universities to accept recommended credits based on military training and experiences.



SOURCES

¹todaysmilitary.com/education-training/paying-college
²militaryonesource.mil/-/how-to-use-the-military-tuition-assistance-program
³medicineandthemilitary.com/officer-and-medical-training/medical-school

EDUCATION IN ACTION

The Military provides its service members opportunities to further their professional development through various certifications and technical and on-the-job training courses

As a graduate of San Francisco State University with a degree in film, Petty Officer 3rd Class Anthony Pappaly wasn't sure how his studies would translate into a career in the Coast Guard. After joining, Anthony continued his passion for photography and videography, eventually leading him to a career in public affairs.

Like many jobs, the Coast Guard requires specific training for certain roles, and becoming a public affairs specialist is no different. Tasked with telling the Coast Guard's story, Anthony attended Defense Information School (DINFOS). A requirement for all public affairs personnel across the Military, DINFOS trains service members in a variety of subject areas, including print and broadcast journalism, graphic design and more. "At DINFOS, they teach you everything from video production to social media and more. They want you to be a jack-of-all-trades when it comes to media," Anthony says.

While Anthony already knew some aspects of videography and photography, his training only enhanced his expertise. At DINFOS, where the creative freedom to learn and explore is encouraged, Anthony maintained his personal passion while developing his professional career.

Using all his training, Anthony is a vital member of his public affairs team. Serving as a liaison to the public and local New York media, Anthony communicates the missions and successes of the Coast Guard through social media, press releases, videos and more. His role gives him the unique opportunity to highlight all the Coast Guard does as well as share the untold stories of its members, including one of the first female Native American chief petty officers for Native American History Month.

"You get so many opportunities in the Coast Guard, there's always a chance to get better at your craft."

PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS
ANTHONY PAPPALY
COAST GUARD

Putting his videography skills to the test, Anthony interviews one of the first female Native American Coast Guard chief petty officers.

"The Army Reserve gave me all the training and tools I needed to succeed in learning a new language, and what I learned only enhanced my skills in my civilian career."

SGT.
EMILY DOWDELL
ARMY RESERVE

"Air Force training programs were major contributions to my personal and professional development, greatly enhancing my administration and leadership skills over the course of my military career."

TECH. SGT.
JUNTRANEK POWELL
AIR FORCE RESERVE

To become proficient in human resources, Juntranek attended technical school and Airman Leadership School.

Daniel uses his IT skills to configure a fiber optic network that ensures his fellow service members can communicate.

"In the IT industry, certifications are important, and the Air Force does a good job at providing me opportunities for further development."

SENIOR AIRMAN
DANIEL TUZOLANA
AIR FORCE

In her civilian life, Emily teaches Spanish and volunteers as a math tutor in her community. She says her military training, including her world-class training from the Defense Language Institute, has helped her become a better teacher for her Soldiers and her students.

OPPORTUNITIES AWAIT

CAPT.
DAVID PEREZ
MARINE CORPS

The diverse experiences available in the Military allow service members to contribute meaningfully to their work, their communities and their lives

LEADING WITH PURPOSE



Marine Corps Capt. David Perez didn't become a military leader overnight. From day one, the Marine Corps works to develop strong leaders by giving them tools and guidance to help others be successful. The formal and informal training Capt. Perez has received continually prepares him for the next level of responsibility as he progresses in his career. Attending Expeditionary Warfare School helped him prepare for his current role as a company commander where he oversees more than 300 Marines. In this role, Capt. Perez has the opportunity to make an impact in each of their lives — professionally and personally.

A big part of his role is teaching and mentoring the Marines in his company. As far as responsibilities go, Capt. Perez is keenly aware of the influence he has on his Marines. He is responsible for both offensive and defensive operations, in addition to the welfare of his company. "I have two different responsibilities: supporting the missions and supporting my Marines. Anything that the company does, or fails to do, is on me," he says.

"Being a leader is more than telling my Marines what to do. It's about mentoring and helping them figure out what's right for them, educating them on what's about to come. And then continuing to talk to and mentor them — you're a leader for life."

Capt. Perez strives to make a positive impact on the lives of his Marines by giving them purpose and encouraging them in various aspects of their lives, whether that's making certain they complete their professional training and certifications or that they sign up for their educational benefits. "There's the personal side to it as well," Capt. Perez says. "I'm responsible for the Marines and ensuring that they're set up for success, not only in their career, but in their civilian lives."

PICTURED LEFT

As a company commander, Capt. Perez teaches and mentors hundreds of Marines in the art of amphibious combat.



Jada prepares her crew and their vehicle before heading out for routine field exercises and practice fire missions.

STAFF SGT.
JADA MADSON
ARMY

CONFIDENCE IN ACTION



At the time she joined, Army Staff Sgt. Jada Madson didn't think the Military would have such a profound impact on her professional and personal life. As a multiple launch rocket systems section chief, Jada oversees a crew that maintains an armed vehicle used to provide effective firepower to divert enemy advances on the battlefield. Day to day, Jada guides her team through practice fire missions, field exercises and vehicle maintenance to ensure they're proficient and prepared if called into action.

Jada understands the responsibility that comes with being a section chief and her individual impact on the overall mission. It's on Jada and her team to work together to protect fellow Soldiers on the ground. She credits the Military for giving her the opportunity to grow and gain the confidence to take on those responsibilities and be more vocal — both in and out of uniform. "The increased

responsibilities that I've gained in the Army broke me out of my shell," she says. "I'm not afraid to speak my mind anymore."

Getting to learn a variety of skills is just one of the reasons Jada enjoys being in the Military. Another is the impact she's had on her team and the satisfaction she gets from being a mentor and seeing her crew succeed. "It makes me feel so good when somebody that I supervised advances in their career because of my training," she says.

"My job is very rewarding, and the skills I've developed in the Army, like public speaking, staying organized and management, have really benefited my life."

SUPPORT SYSTEM

Making an impact in the Military isn't limited to high-ranking positions. Every service member, no matter their role, contributes meaningfully to the overall mission, and Air Force Reserve Tech. Sgt. Juntrane Powell does just that. As a commander's support staff member, a role that closely equates to a human resources specialist in the civilian world, Juntrane doesn't directly oversee any Airmen, but she is tasked with taking care of her unit administratively. Her responsibilities encompass a range of programs, from overseeing flight-line authorizations and security clearances to ensuring leave balances, pay and ordering new uniforms.

Juntrane's role is critical. Without the commander's support staff ensuring all administrative and communication duties are handled, Airmen would be less able to focus, impacting both member and mission readiness. Keeping that in mind, Juntrane advocates that "the Air Force is very big on 'if you take care of your members, they can take care of the mission.' Being able to give people peace of mind is always rewarding."

"Being commander's support staff is super rewarding. It's my job to take care of the member so that they don't have to worry and stress and can focus on the mission."

Juntrane's military training has taught her valuable skills, strengthening her in more ways than she could've imagined — on and off duty. "The training I've received prepared me for things like public speaking, writing performance evaluations and the importance of taking care of your people," Juntrane says.

TECH. SGT.
JUNTRANE POWELL
AIR FORCE RESERVE

MAKING AN IMPACT

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Dominique Velazquez’s work as a hospital corpsman — similar to a civilian certified nursing assistant and emergency medical technician — has provided him with countless opportunities to help others.

Perhaps most meaningful to Dominique are the connections he forms with his patients working in cardiothoracic and vascular surgery. “With our patients, we develop bonds, a deep level of trust,” he says. “Witnessing somebody at their lowest and being a part of their growth ... that really inspires me.”

For Dominique, the emotional support he offers his patients is just as valuable as the medical support he provides. “I remember I was taking care of this patient with a surgical incision she thought would never fully heal,” he says. “I reassured her, ‘Don’t worry. I got you. I’m here for you.’ After three months of healing, she was so thankful, and it made the whole process worthwhile.”

The impact he makes isn’t a one-way street. The quality time and connections he creates with his patients offer him the motivation to continue his own personal and professional growth as well.

The opportunity to heal, educate and encourage his patients has allowed Dominique to become a better version of himself. “There are all different mindsets, all different kinds of people in the Military, but we all come together to give back,” he says. “As hospital corpsmen, we strive to give back to the community, to give patients that motivation to continue to push forward.”

“The main thing I love about my job is being able to impact the lives of those around me, giving that motivation, that positivity.”

FAST FACT

The Military offers unparalleled medical training and experience. To learn more about the range of medical careers offered in the Military, visit medicineandthemilitary.com.



PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS
DOMINIQUE VELAZQUEZ
NAVY

PURSuing A PASSION

We all know effective communication is important, but in Army Reserve Sgt. Emily Dowdell’s role, it’s absolutely essential. Serving part time as a cryptologic linguist, she’s responsible for identifying, analyzing and translating foreign communications to support missions and prepare highly classified reports. Some of this intelligence helps keep service members safe, while some helps inform strategic decisions for policymakers. Depending on the report’s content, it could even end up on the desk of the U.S. president!

After earning her bachelor’s degree and teaching high school Spanish, Emily enlisted in search of a new adventure. She discovered that she could continue pursuing her love of learning and languages in the Military. “By studying the nuances of other languages, from traditional words to slang terms, I’ll always be learning something new,” she says.

“Languages are my passion, and I wanted the opportunity to learn more through the Military.”

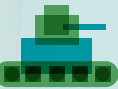
Once she completed Basic Training, Emily attended the Defense Language Institute and learned a language that was completely new to her — Pashto, typically spoken in the Middle East. Learning to read, speak and write in Pashto was no small feat; its alphabet and grammatical structure are different from other languages Emily studied.

As a command language program manager, Emily also assists other linguists in their qualifications and testing. “I volunteered for that role because I wanted to learn more, but also because I wanted to help other Soldiers.” In her civilian life, Emily teaches Spanish and volunteers as a tutor in her community. She says her military and civilian careers complement one another and help her be a better teacher for her Soldiers and her students.

SGT.
EMILY DOWDELL
ARMY RESERVE



These are just some of the hundreds of careers the Military has to offer. While jobs vary in terms of skills, each is essential and contributes to the overall mission in its own way.



Combat Operations



Cybersecurity



Engineering



Healthcare



Human Resources



Intelligence



Learn more about career opportunities

DISCOVER WHAT'S POSSIBLE

From satellite antennas to cybersecurity, technological innovation transforms today's military both on Earth and in space

Though the Space Force is the Military's newest Service branch, its members are already making an impact on the world through their use of state-of-the-art technology. Take Space Force Spc. 4 Trenton Ching, for instance. At just 20 years old, Trenton is a space systems operator responsible for ensuring that American technological assets are protected both on the ground and in space.

As the country invests more in the exploration of extraterrestrial space, the work Trenton and the Space Force do as a whole will become even more critical to protecting the American way of life. "The majority of our assets here on Earth depend on our systems out in space," he says. "Things like communication lines, airlines ... all depend on our assets in space. That's something I don't think people really think about."



Trenton is part of a defensive space control unit that monitors satellite communications to ensure things like aircraft, drones and naval vessels are not compromised by adversary electromagnetic interference (EMI). What's EMI? Think of it as radio waves — if the wrong waves make their way into our computers, internet, phone lines, etc., there could be a great negative impact on the systems our society runs on.

"I LOVE BEING IN A TECHNICAL FIELD AND HAVING KNOWLEDGE THAT MOST PEOPLE DON'T HAVE. IT'S VERY REWARDING AND, TO BE HONEST, IT JUST FEELS COOL."

Trenton uses large antennas and advanced computer systems to monitor for EMI that could potentially disrupt or even shut down American infrastructure (buildings, phone lines, internet connections, etc.).

SPC. 4
TRENTON CHING
SPACE FORCE





It's Capt. Perez's job to ensure his company keeps ACVs running at peak efficiency. "Anything that the company does, or fails to do, is on me," he says.

CAPT.
DAVID PEREZ
MARINE CORPS



As a company commander in the Marine Corps, one of Capt. David Perez's responsibilities is to oversee the maintenance and operation of one of the branch's newest and most impressive technical advancements: the latest amphibious combat vehicle (ACV).

Making its debut in 2020, this latest ACV model allows Capt. Perez's infantry unit to move from land to sea (and vice versa) in a matter of seconds, something that's critical to success in combat, as adversaries develop more sophisticated technologies of their own.

"I command close to 100 vehicles and am responsible for offensive and defensive

operations in combat," he says. "ACVs provide us with the flexibility to go anywhere we want and support any mission we may be given."

"I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR MY MARINES AND ENSURING THAT THEY'RE SET UP FOR SUCCESS, NOT ONLY IN THEIR CAREER, BUT IN LIFE."

As head of his company, Capt. Perez trains more than 300 Marines on the intricacies

of the ACV, equipping them all with the knowledge needed to effectively operate these advanced vehicles. There are few organizations in the world that would give this level of experience to someone in their early 30s, and the importance of his role is not lost on Capt. Perez.

"I'm responsible for my Marines and ensuring that they're set up for success, not only in their career, but in life," he says. "Through our training with the ACVs, we're creating better citizens for the future who will thrive whether they remain in or choose to separate from the Military."

SENIOR AIRMAN
DANIEL TUZOLANA
AIR FORCE



Daniel makes adjustments to a piece of fiber optic cable. Something as small as this can connect service members in Colorado to their counterparts in California.

DISCOVER WHAT'S POSSIBLE

From telephones to internet networks and intrusion-detection systems, Air Force Senior Airman Daniel Tuzolana's job as a cyber transport systems technician is to ensure service members across several military bases in the western United States are able to exchange information.

Secure emails, phone calls, text messages, tactical strategies — the communication of these and more from base to base and unit to unit depends on Daniel and his team's understanding of fiber optic networks and how to properly install and maintain them. In many ways, he's a communications jack-of-all-trades.

"Fundamentally, we make sure the Air Force is able to communicate in both deployed and nondeployed environments," he says. "Having the versatility to set up communication systems where they previously had not been could be lifesaving in the Military. If my role didn't exist, then no one could receive critical commands, supply updates and more."

"THE JOB GIVES YOU A LOT OF DIFFERENT LANES, SO I CAN GO INTO CYBERSECURITY, SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION OR BE A SOFTWARE ENGINEER."

The wide variety of training and certifications Daniel has received through the Military with little to no cost, like the industry standard Security+, are setting him up for success — in and out of uniform.

"All I really wanted to do was something I'm good at or liked, and I could do both as a cyber transport systems technician. I want to do something to be proud of ... something that's going to provide for me and I can do for a long time. I will definitely be in the IT world whether in the Air Force or outside."

FAST FACT

THERE ARE CYBER ROLES IN ALL SIX MILITARY BRANCHES, WHETHER YOU'RE ACTIVE DUTY OR PART TIME, AN OFFICER OR ENLISTED. TAKE THE CYBER CHALLENGE TO SEE IF YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A CYBERWARRIOR.



STRENGTHENING THEIR SKILLS

The Military provides service members with expertise to help them succeed in their current roles and beyond

TECH. SGT.
JUNTRANEK POWELL
AIR FORCE RESERVE

NETWORKING

Networking is an integral part of Air Force Reserve Tech. Sgt. Juntranek Powell's role in human resources. "My job is about taking care of our unit's members," she says, "so I get to meet a lot of people and learn about the work they do." These relationships proved to be incredibly valuable for her career path. "I was considered for and got a particular role because I had networked with the supervisor and she liked my work ethic," she says. "Networking has opened up so many doors for me in my military and civilian life that wouldn't have been open otherwise."



TEAMWORK

Air National Guard Airman 1st Class Marissa Airoidi works on a three-person team that's trained to repair and maintain aircraft fuel systems for cargo planes and fighter jets. "We are constantly working together in this job. One person reads the step-by-step orders, one person makes the necessary repairs and the other monitors the fuel levels." Marissa's training taught her many team-building skills to prepare her for this collaborative environment. She says, "We learned that having close camaraderie is critical to the overall success of the mission because it helps us communicate effectively."



CALM UNDER PRESSURE

Petty Officer 3rd Class Anthony Pappaly spent his first two years in the Coast Guard on a patrol boat. He balanced deck maintenance, navigation and rescue swimming with other daily tasks that arose. "During that time, I definitely gained a lot of confidence in my abilities to stay calm during challenging situations," he says. That skill has been a huge benefit for Anthony in his current role as a public affairs specialist. "Each day is different in my job. One day I'm working on social media campaigns in the office, the next I'm creating a video on boating safety," Anthony says. "But my experiences have helped me realize I can handle more challenges than I ever imagined."



TIME MANAGEMENT

While serving part time in the Army National Guard, Spc. Chris Mendell is also a full-time student at Columbia University. Though his schedule is busy, from playing club hockey to analyzing intelligence and studying neuroscience, Chris has developed ways to manage his time effectively. "In the Military, I learned about this tool called backward planning, which allows me to organize my daily schedule in a way that works for me," he says. "I've learned how to balance everything so that I have the opportunity to do the homework I need to do, but also have moments to relax."



LEADERSHIP

When Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Dominique Velazquez was deployed to Japan, he began to take on leadership responsibilities. "I never saw myself as a leader, but I learned so much about managing my staff, facilitating projects and maintaining a cohesive work environment." Now, in his current position, Dominique is a leading petty officer, helping his fellow service members advance their careers. "I help them manage their work schedules, their personal lives and their volunteer opportunities," Dominique says. "My job is to give them everything that I can to make them better people, just as my leaders did with me."

Military Misconceptions

MYTHS

VS.

REALITIES



MYTH

People join the Military because they have no options

REALITY

"People join for different reasons. Some join because they want to go to college. Some join just for the adventure. People come from all sorts of backgrounds. You can't really label any service member a certain way. They're so diverse."

PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS
ANTHONY PAPPALY
COAST GUARD



MYTH

You can't make it through boot camp

REALITY

"I honestly didn't think I could do it ... but getting through boot camp 100% will always be one of the greatest memories I've ever had. Meeting new people, getting through challenges, overcoming obstacles as a group and pushing each other ... I grew as a person for sure."

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS
MARISSA AIROLDI
AIR NATIONAL GUARD



MYTH

The Military is all combat, all the time

REALITY

"A common misconception is that we're always at war, but that's not true. Corpsmen are the ones that heal people. There's a lot of jobs that don't require you to be on the front lines."

PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS
DOMINIQUE VELAZQUEZ
NAVY



MYTH

Opportunities are limited in the Military

REALITY

"The Military is definitely the most diverse organization that I've ever been a part of. It isn't one size fits all ... there are so many different paths that you can take. Whatever you're interested in. There's a lot of opportunities to learn new skills."

SGT.
EMILY DOWDELL
ARMY RESERVE



MYTH

There's no work-life balance in the Military

REALITY

"In the Military you have a job that you do professionally, you have a social life, you have friends and you have relationships. Being in the Military has prepared me so well for life."

SENIOR AIRMAN
DANIEL TUZOLANA
AIR FORCE



MYTH

Women can't work in combat roles

REALITY

"It feels good knowing that I'm a female in a combat role that's still dominated by males. I think it's super rewarding and I don't think of it as a gender divide at this point. It's more common that females are here now, and we all work together."

STAFF SGT.
JADA MADSON
ARMY



MYTH

You can't continue your education in the Military

REALITY

"I'd say the biggest misconception is not being able to progress your education or to pursue your degree while being in the Service. If anything, the Military gives you those opportunities to pursue your education, your bachelor's degree or your master's degree."

SPC. 4
TRENTON CHING
SPACE FORCE

M JOURNEY

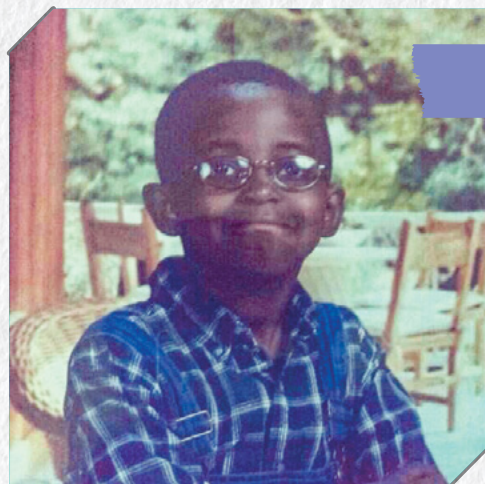
Learn how the various paths to joining the Military are as diverse as the people who serve

JOINING & ELIGIBILITY

With more than 250 career options, the Military offers endless opportunities for professional and personal development. Learn more about how you can start your journey today.



SENIOR AIRMAN
DANIEL TUZOLANA
AIR FORCE



AGE 5

When he was five years old, Daniel and his family left the Democratic Republic of Congo and immigrated to the United States. He spent much of his childhood in Fort Worth, Texas, and, like most kids, enjoyed watching Saturday morning cartoons and playing outside with his friends and family.



AGE 17

As high school came to a close and the cost of college loomed, Daniel began talking with a friend's mother who served, admiring how she was able to provide for her family while doing something she loved. After a few semesters of college, Daniel enlisted.



TODAY

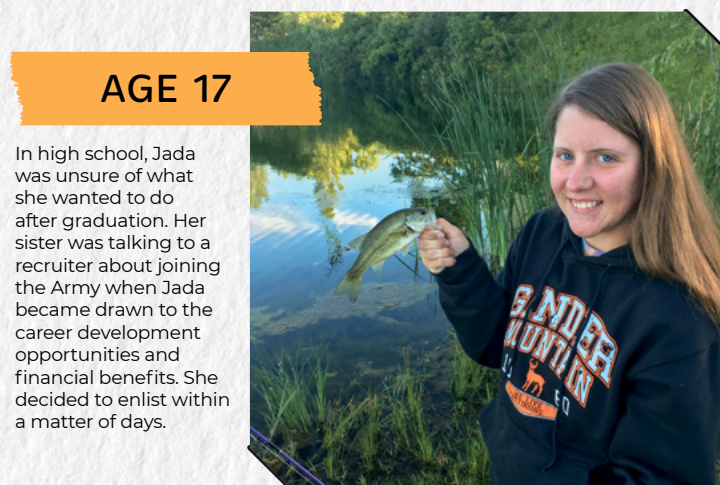
Daniel is a cyber transport systems technician in the Air Force pursuing a B.S. in computer science. While his family was hesitant when he first decided to enlist, that's since changed. "They're really proud now. My mom wants me to wear my uniform for no reason sometimes when I'm home," he says.

STAFF SGT.
JADA MADSON
ARMY



AGE 6

Jada grew up in a small town in Wisconsin. Her family lived on a couple of acres of farmland, and she spent most of her time playing in and around their barn with her siblings and neighbors.



AGE 17

In high school, Jada was unsure of what she wanted to do after graduation. Her sister was talking to a recruiter about joining the Army when Jada became drawn to the career development opportunities and financial benefits. She decided to enlist within a matter of days.



TODAY

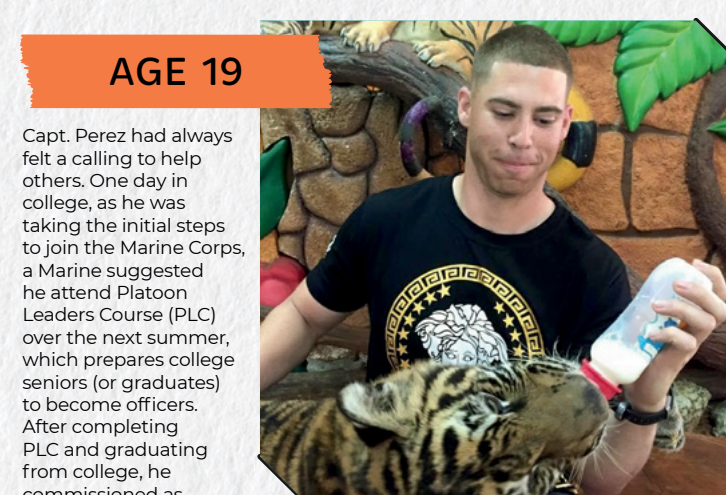
Jada's part of a new generation of female Soldiers in combat roles. When recalling high school, she wishes she'd known how much the Military has to offer: "There's so much more to the Military than people think. There are school and medical benefits. I received professional education, civilian education and have been able to travel."

CAPT.
DAVID PEREZ
MARINE CORPS



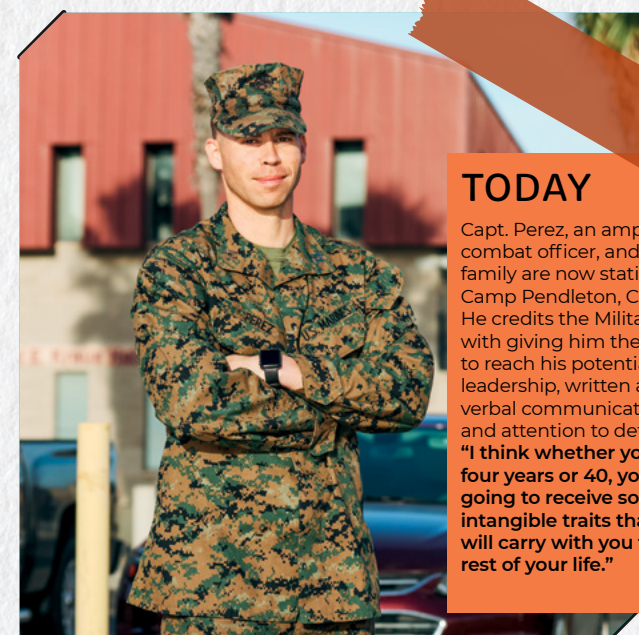
AGE 8

Capt. David Perez was raised in the Miami area and gravitated toward sports at a young age. "I was always outside — anything that involved competition, I did it all."



AGE 19

Capt. Perez had always felt a calling to help others. One day in college, as he was taking the initial steps to join the Marine Corps, a Marine suggested he attend Platoon Leaders Course (PLC) over the next summer, which prepares college seniors (or graduates) to become officers. After completing PLC and graduating from college, he commissioned as an officer.



TODAY

Capt. Perez, an amphibious combat officer, and his family are now stationed at Camp Pendleton, California. He credits the Military with giving him the skills to reach his potential, like leadership, written and verbal communication, and attention to detail. "I think whether you do four years or 40, you're going to receive so many intangible traits that you will carry with you for the rest of your life."

LIFE IN THE MILITARY

In and out of uniform, service members are living their lives to the fullest by pursuing their interests, spending time with friends and family, and exploring the world

"It's great being only 45 minutes from the mountains. It's really nice being able to adopt these new hobbies. I'm thankful for being stationed somewhere I enjoy being. One of the reasons I enlisted was to experience other parts of the country, to see what's out there."

SPC. 4
TRENTON CHING
SPACE FORCE

Colorado offers picturesque hiking, something Trenton takes advantage of whenever he gets the chance.



"I like doing outdoor things. My husband and I like to go kayaking or hiking, spending time together. I always feel like I have a good work-life balance."

SGT.
EMILY DOWDELL
ARMY RESERVE

Emily and her husband enjoy exploring the Augusta, Georgia, area where they live, especially unique features of the area like Savannah Rapids Park.



"It's a big media market, so it's pretty exciting living here. I've done stand-up comedy everywhere I've been stationed, and New York is the comedy mecca for stand-up."

PETTY OFFICER
3RD CLASS
ANTHONY PAPPALY
COAST GUARD

Anthony has always been a fan of stand-up comedy but fell in love when he decided to give it a shot himself. His interest in comedy fits in perfectly with his life in New York City.



"I've been in intramural leagues on base, and it's been a really fun experience. It lets you bond with co-workers and meet new people on base."

SENIOR AIRMAN
DANIEL TUZOLANA
AIR FORCE

Daniel has always been interested in sports. Being part of a team has taught him how to work with others, a skill he can apply to his life in the Military.



"We go camping a lot – I just like to be outside. It's really cool to challenge yourself to see what you can do with what you have. You can even rent a camper from a base nearby at a discounted rate."

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS
MARISSA AIROLDI
AIR NATIONAL GUARD

When Marissa was younger, her family had an RV and a favorite campground. Despite being a full-time student and a part-time service member, she's still able to make time for camping.



"A lot of the same philosophies that we use in the Marine Corps apply to a game like chess. It makes you think two, three, four moves ahead. So I've been trying to pass that on to my Marines, and now they're starting to play."

CAPT.
DAVID PEREZ
MARINE CORPS

Capt. Perez started playing chess as a kid, and he's been sharing that passion with family and friends ever since.



"The library on base is great because I love to read. I spend a lot of time reading – it allows me to have a better work-life balance."

TECH. SGT.
JUNTRANEK POWELL
AIR FORCE RESERVE

One of the things Juntranek likes most about where she's stationed is the on-base library. Since it's so close to work, she's able to go whenever she wants.

FAST FACT

Some on-base amenities include:

Military bases are a lot like towns and have communities all their own. Though not all service members live on base, they all can take advantage of the amenities whether they live on base or not.



GROCERY STORES



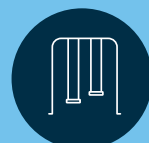
MOVIE THEATERS



FOOD TRUCKS



GYMS



PLAYGROUNDS



RESTAURANTS



BOWLING ALLEYS



LIBRARIES



ART CENTERS



PET BOARDING

Learn more
about life in
the Military



"The bonds and relationships we make with each other are amazing. We all embrace the same experiences, and we have each other. It really motivates us to want to be better and challenge each other. These are bonds that last a lifetime, seriously."

PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS
DOMINIQUE VELAZQUEZ
NAVY

Dominique loves to dance and started a performance group with some of his military friends.

TOGETHER WE THRIVE

The connections you make in
the Military are strong,
unique and last a lifetime



"You all have different backgrounds, and you might be there for different reasons, but for the most part, you're all there together."

SENIOR AIRMAN
DANIEL TUZOLANA
AIR FORCE

During the workday, Daniel takes time to connect with his co-workers between meetings and tasks.

"The Military is very similar to sports, where you have that camaraderie, you train together and you win together."

CAPT.
DAVID PEREZ
MARINE CORPS

Capt. Perez knows that the bonds you make through camaraderie and teamwork can help lead to success in any mission.



"The friendships I've made in the Military are great, they're amazing. You just connect quicker. You meet somebody that has the same lifestyle as you, it's just a connection that you can relate to automatically."

TECH. SGT.
JUNTRANEK POWELL
AIR FORCE RESERVE

After their workdays end, Juntranek and her friends enjoy hanging out on base and playing cards.

“Joining the Military was probably the **best decision** I made in my life. It’s team building. It’s the friendships. It’s the satisfaction, the travel. **It’s worth it.**”

STAFF SGT.
JADA MADSON
ARMY



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