

FUTURES



JUMP-START *YOUR* JOURNEY

IN THIS ISSUE: MILITARY MISCONCEPTIONS | EDUCATION AT EASE | A DAY IN THE LIFE

Find Your Future



"So, what's next?"

That's a big question, and, at this point in your life, there may be several thoughts swirling in your head trying to answer it. And that's OK, because everyone's path is unique, each leading to its own accomplishments, rewards and moments of fulfillment.

To help you explore a path absolutely packed with possibilities, *FUTURES* highlights young service members whose decisions to join the Military empowered them in countless ways. Their stories are about connecting with others, furthering their educations and developing skills they can take anywhere.

Ready to learn more? **Let's go!**

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FACES *of* SERVICE

AN INSIDE LOOK AT LIFE

THROUGH THEIR EYES



**JUAN
CANAS**

STAFF SERGEANT
ARMY



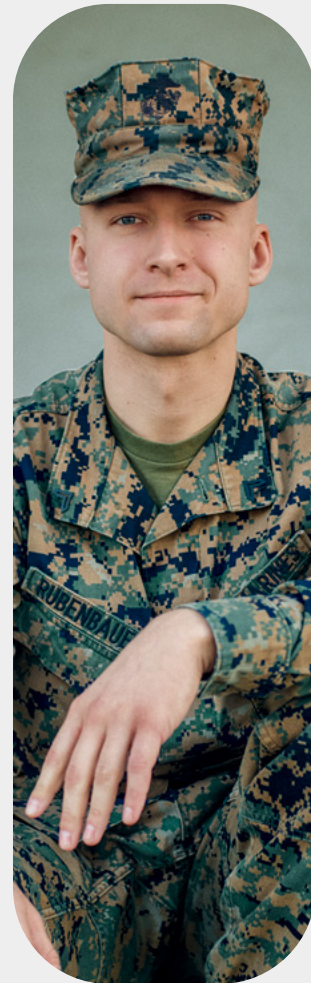
**DAISY
AGUILAR**

SECOND LIEUTENANT
ARMY RESERVE



**REBEKAH
HARDACRE**

SPECIALIST
ARMY NATIONAL GUARD



**ETHAN
RUBENBAUER**

CORPORAL
MARINE CORPS



**JULIAN
BEDFORD**

PETTY OFFICER THIRD CLASS
NAVY



**RYAN
BODDEN**

SENIOR AIRMAN
AIR FORCE



**SHAKEYNA
SMITH**

MASTER SERGEANT
AIR FORCE RESERVE



**DAVIYD "REX"
HEARN**

STAFF SERGEANT
AIR NATIONAL GUARD



**JONATHAN
NOVAK**

FIRST LIEUTENANT
SPACE FORCE



**ARIANNE
GUNN**

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER
COAST GUARD



Military 101

With more than **250 different occupations** and a variety of ways to serve – including full time (Active Duty) and part time (Reserve and Guard) – you can find a path that works for you. See how the Military can help you reach your personal and professional goals.

- **ARMY**
Active Duty & Reserve & Guard
- **AIR FORCE**
Active Duty & Reserve & Guard
- **MARINE CORPS**
Active Duty & Reserve
- **SPACE FORCE**
Active Duty
- **NAVY**
Active Duty & Reserve
- **COAST GUARD**
Active Duty & Reserve

Turn the page for more about the different ways to serve. Want additional information on military basics? Just scan the QR code.



OFFICERS

are the managers of the Military, with responsibilities that include planning missions, providing direction and supporting the enlisted service members within their units. These positions require a college degree or equivalent. You 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 one of the 1,700+ colleges and universities across the United States.

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, typically in exchange for a paid college education. In return, students commit to serve either on active duty or part time in the Reserve or Guard for a set period after graduation, usually five years. Learn more at todaysmilitary.com/education-training/rotc-programs.

"Officer roles are inherently management positions that provide the opportunity to develop your own leadership style. In addition to completing the tasks and duties in our roles, we have teams of people we're responsible for."

1ST LT. / **JON NOVAK** / SPACE FORCE

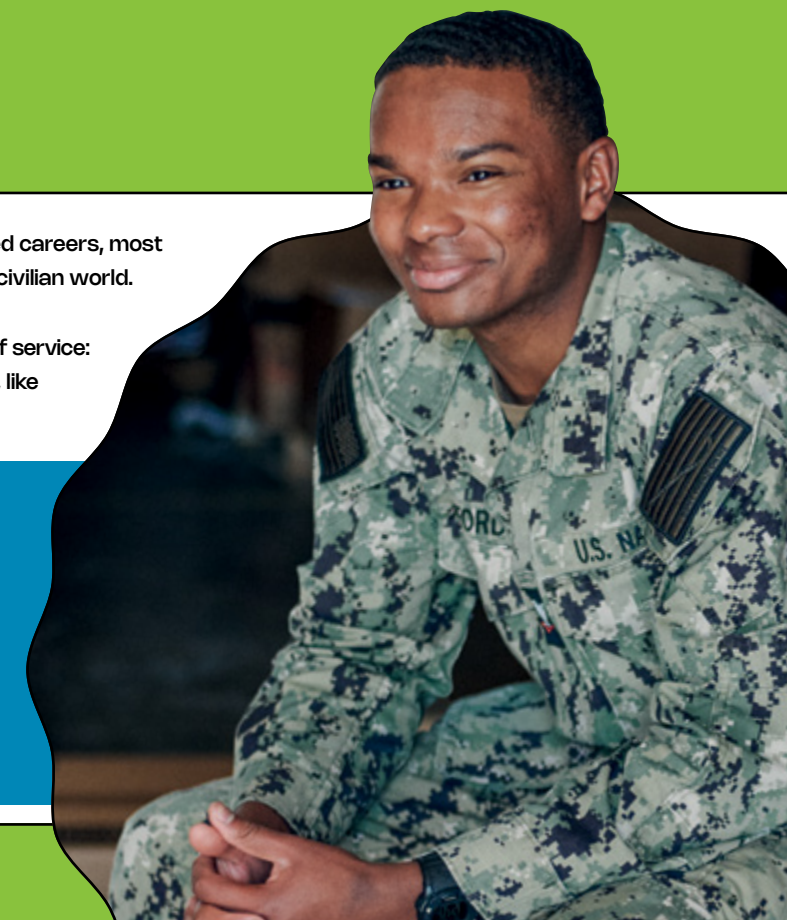
ENLISTED

roles require a high school diploma or GED certificate. There are a variety of enlisted careers, most of which involve hands-on training and skill development, that transfer well to the civilian world.

BASIC TRAINING, often known as boot camp, prepares recruits for various aspects of service: physical, mental and emotional. It also gives service members the necessary tools, like teamwork and confidence, to prepare new recruits for success.

"I enlisted because it closely aligned with my values and desire to help others. It's a place to cultivate opportunities for a better life — from going to college to building my career and supporting my family."

PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS / **JULIAN BEDFORD** / NAVY



Ways to SERVE

Choose your own adventure! You can serve full time while knocking out college classes, part time while pursuing a career or any combination that gets you closer to your goals.



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 an occupational specialty. Off duty is when active-duty service members pursue their personal interests, like hobbies, education or spending time with friends and family.

"With full-time service, once the daily responsibilities of my job are complete, I'm able to use the free time to improve on the things I want to learn. I'm bettering myself to the highest degree possible through the Military."

CPL. / **ETHAN RUBENBAUER** / MARINE CORPS



RESERVE

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.

"Serving part time means you can continue to pursue and grow in your civilian job. Oftentimes, the experience you receive in the Reserve transfers over nicely to civilian jobs."

2ND LT. / **DAISY AGUILAR** / ARMY RESERVE

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

NATIONAL GUARD

PART-TIME MILITARY SERVICE* & FULL-TIME CIVILIAN

The Army National Guard and Air National Guard are community based and report to the governors of their respective states unless called to protect U.S. domestic interests during times of conflict, natural disasters or civil emergencies. Every U.S. state and territory, as well as the District of Columbia, fields its own individual Guard unit. They may also be deployed internationally alongside active-duty service members when necessary. Members of the Guard hold civilian jobs and can attend school while conducting their military training part time.

"Part-time service allows me to take part in the things I enjoy during drill weekends, like working on jets, while still being able to pursue my education and find time for the things I love during the week."

STAFF SGT. / **REX HEARN** / ARIZONA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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



IN THE LIFE

A DAY



FULL-TIME SERVICE WITH AIR FORCE SENIOR AIRMAN RYAN BODDEN

Active Duty – or full-time service – is typically a 40- to 50-hour workweek, sometimes more if the mission requires it and sometimes less for holidays and vacations. Ryan serves full time in the Air Force and is currently stationed at Fort Bliss in Texas.

“I love my work environment and the family I have found on my team. We’re all close and work cohesively to progress our skill set to become better people — in and out of work.”

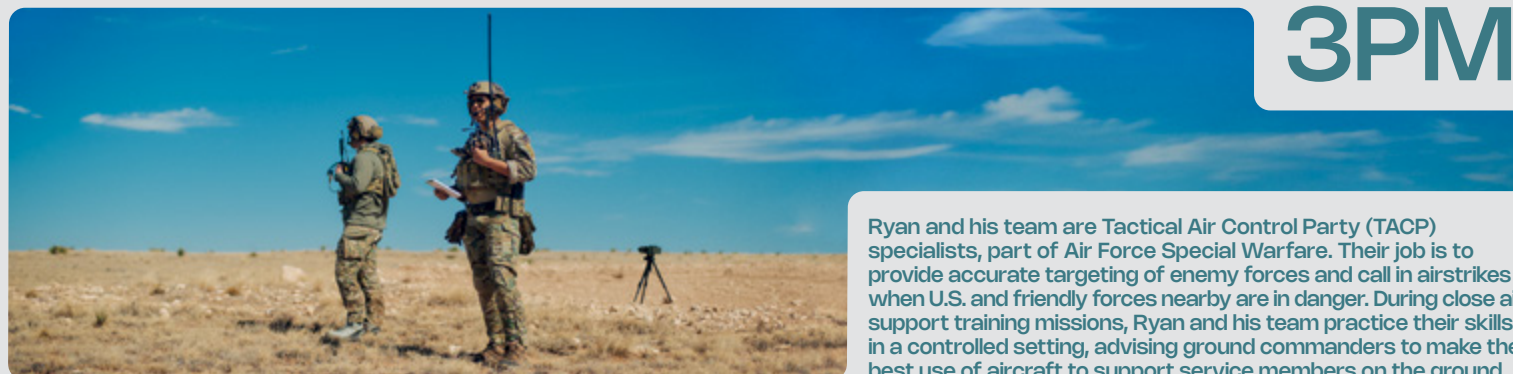


9AM

After driving 40 minutes from the house he and his roommates rent off base, Ryan kicks off his workday by briefing the team on a close air support training mission happening later that day. During the Concept of Operations brief, Ryan tells ground commanders, pilots and other personnel their roles and objectives for the exercise and answers any questions to ensure they have the situational awareness for a safe and successful training.

1PM

Ryan and his colleagues enjoy spending time with one another both on and off the range. At work, they give each other honest feedback to grow and support each other's personal goals. When the workweek is done, Ryan and his team can be found on the golf course, at a backyard barbecue or hosting board game nights.



3PM

Ryan and his team are Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) specialists, part of Air Force Special Warfare. Their job is to provide accurate targeting of enemy forces and call in airstrikes when U.S. and friendly forces nearby are in danger. During close air support training missions, Ryan and his team practice their skills in a controlled setting, advising ground commanders to make the best use of aircraft to support service members on the ground.

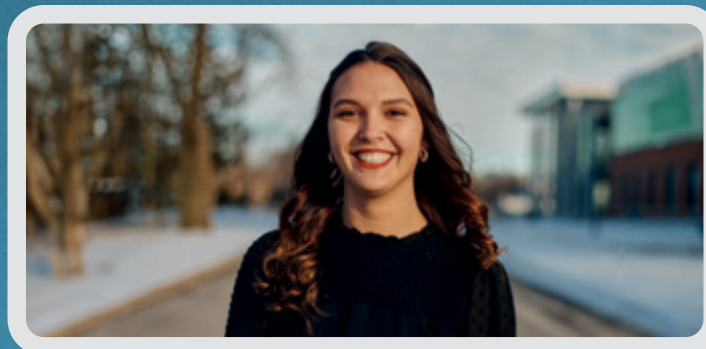
“The Military helps you achieve things you didn’t think you would, and helps you find new interests you wouldn’t necessarily expect, both socially and professionally.”

5PM

After wrapping up his workday, Ryan (right) and his close friend and fellow TACP specialist, Ethan Lawless, enjoy some fresh air on a hike. When he gets home, Ryan washes up, eats dinner and gives his mom or sister a call. As an early bird, Ryan exercises in the morning before work, so he likes to turn in early to get his rest.



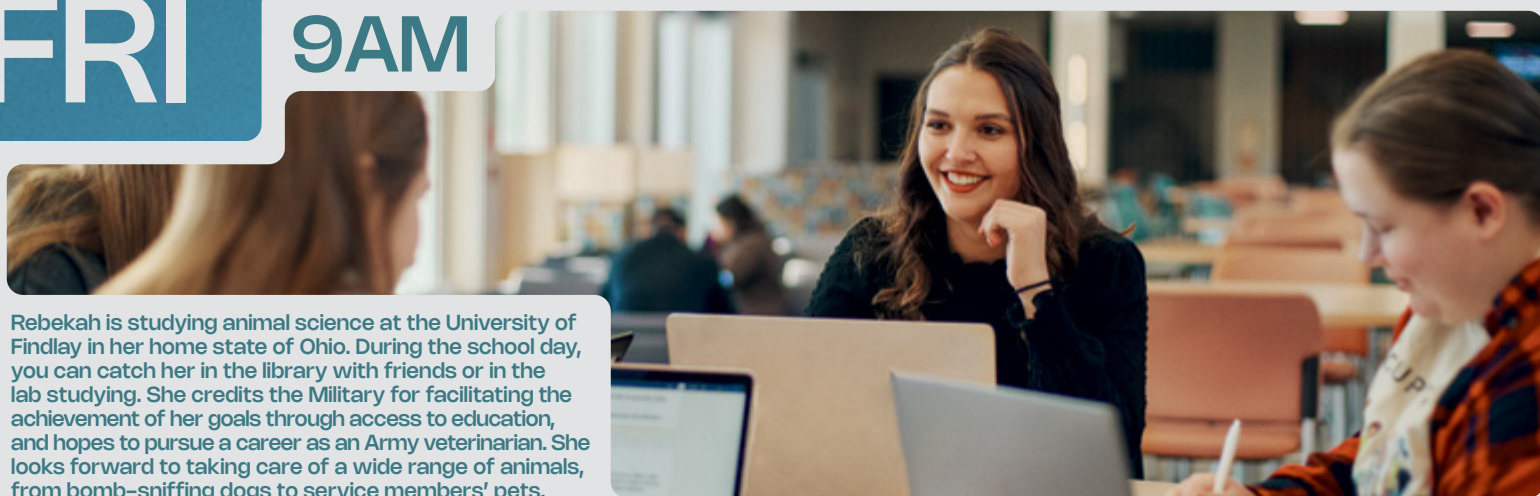
A DAY IN THE LIFE



PART-TIME SERVICE WITH ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SPC. REBEKAH HARDACRE

Members of the Reserve and Guard typically hold civilian jobs or attend school while serving close to home. Military drills are scheduled for a minimum of one weekend a month, and annual training is two weeks a year. By serving on this set schedule, with the help of benefits like the Post-9/11 GI Bill and Tuition Assistance, Rebekah's able to work and pursue her degree.

FRI 9AM



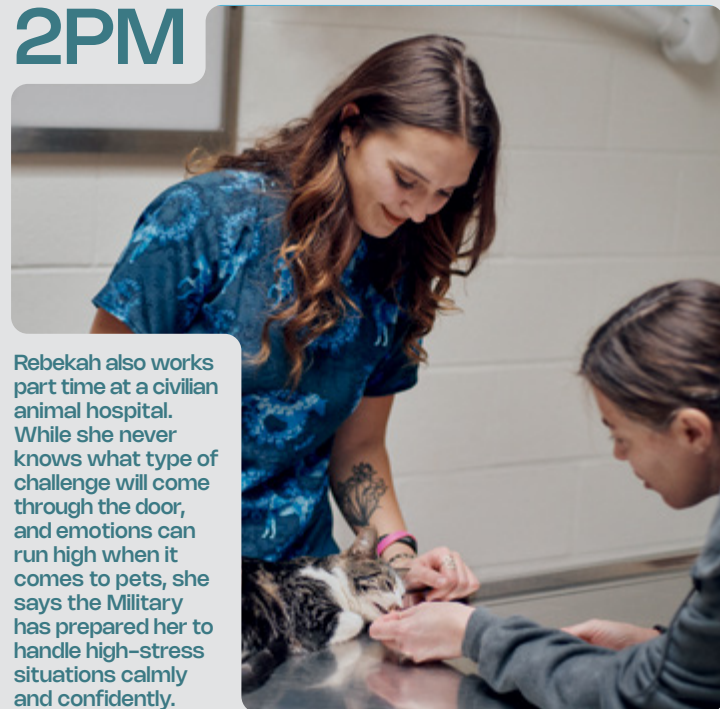
Rebekah is studying animal science at the University of Findlay in her home state of Ohio. During the school day, you can catch her in the library with friends or in the lab studying. She credits the Military for facilitating the achievement of her goals through access to education, and hopes to pursue a career as an Army veterinarian. She looks forward to taking care of a wide range of animals, from bomb-sniffing dogs to service members' pets.

12PM



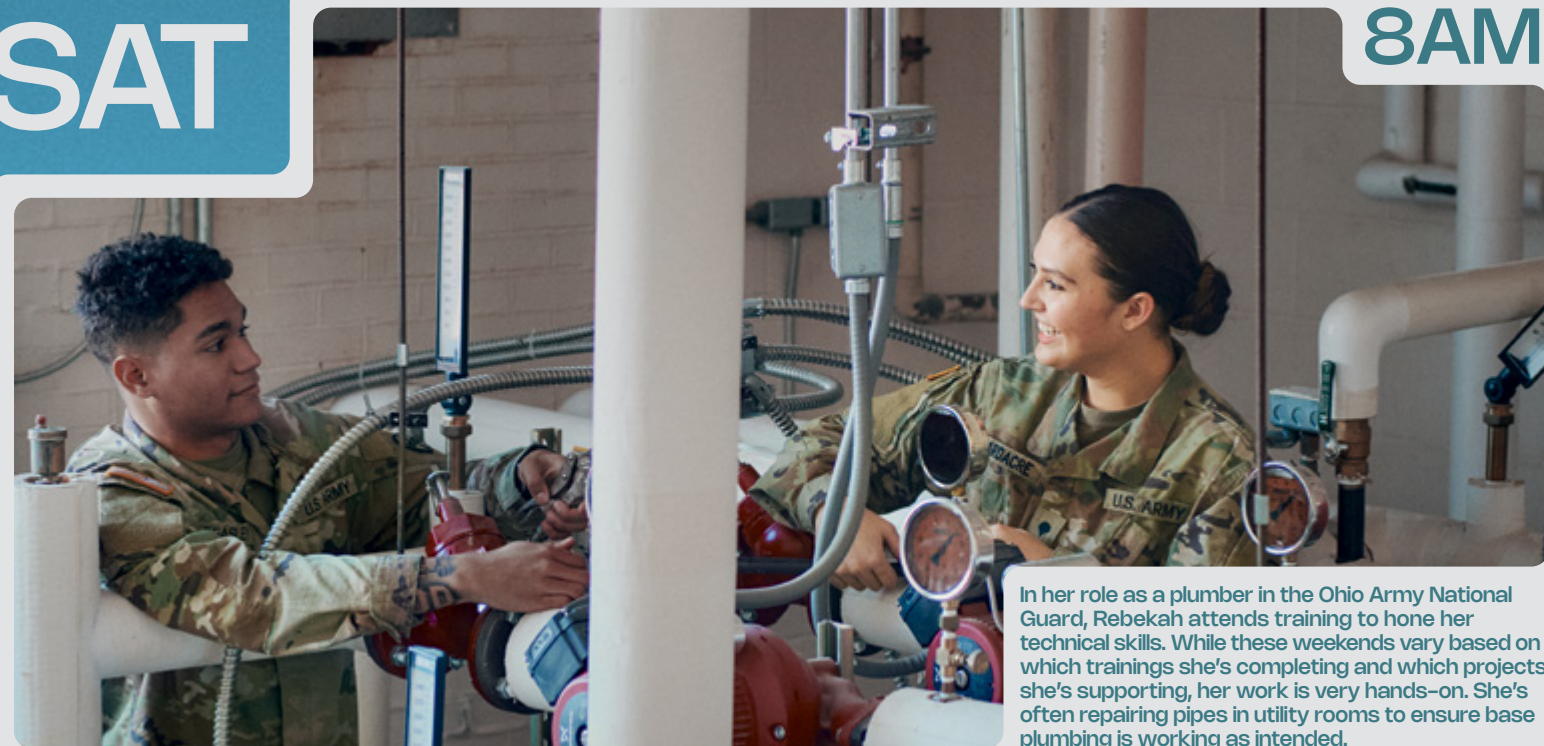
Growing up on a farm gave Rebekah a love of animals, which sparked her interest in becoming a veterinarian. Since she lives and works nearby, she still carves out time to work at her family's dairy farm, taking care of the livestock and maintaining the grounds.

2PM



Rebekah also works part time at a civilian animal hospital. While she never knows what type of challenge will come through the door, and emotions can run high when it comes to pets, she says the Military has prepared her to handle high-stress situations calmly and confidently.

SAT

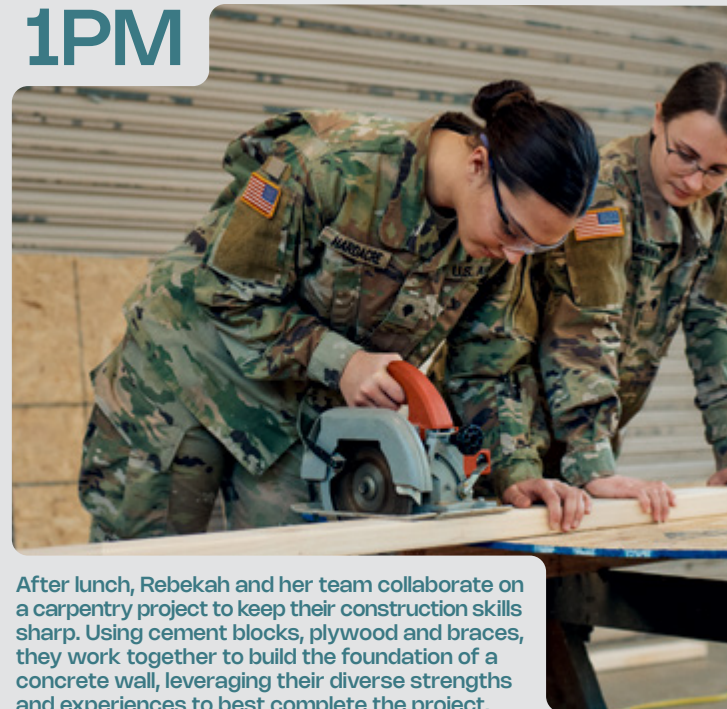


8AM

In her role as a plumber in the Ohio Army National Guard, Rebekah attends training to hone her technical skills. While these weekends vary based on which trainings she's completing and which projects she's supporting, her work is very hands-on. She's often repairing pipes in utility rooms to ensure base plumbing is working as intended.

“Everyone is happy to see each other on drill weekends. It's like a big family, so it's really nice to catch up on our lives and have a good time. We definitely feed off each other's energy and enthusiasm.”

1PM



After lunch, Rebekah and her team collaborate on a carpentry project to keep their construction skills sharp. Using cement blocks, plywood and braces, they work together to build the foundation of a concrete wall, leveraging their diverse strengths and experiences to best complete the project.

5PM



When Rebekah's workday ends, she typically heads to the gym to decompress before having dinner with her housemates. She will drive an hour back to her training facility on Sunday morning to finish her drill weekend. After drill ends on Sunday afternoon, she returns to work and school on Monday.



“The access to higher education I've received through the Military is what will help get me one step closer to my dream of becoming a pilot.”

STAFF SGT. / REX HEARN / ARIZONA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

EDUCATION AT EASE

Open doors to all your educational goals with access to specialized certifications, scholarships and financial aid through the Military

With the support and encouragement of his colleagues, Arizona Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Rex Hearn solidified his commitment to pursue his academic goals and made his dream of attending Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University a reality. He's using the Post-9/11 GI Bill to earn a bachelor's degree in aeronautics with a minor in aeronautical studies and unmanned aircraft systems.

"I'm learning as much as I can about aircraft performance, how they operate and how pilots think," Rex says. "At Embry-Riddle, there's a

program where the school pays for half of your tuition and the GI Bill pays for the remaining half, so I don't have any tuition costs or fees."

As a tactical aircraft mechanic, Rex is responsible for general maintenance and repairs, conducting engine and component inspections, and functional tests, which ensure that aircraft are cleared for flight. The education Rex is receiving helps provide a deeper understanding of and framework for aviation and aerospace-related fields, which he's able to leverage in his day-to-day work, preparing him for future roles.



Jon has used a variety of educational benefits to pursue both undergraduate and graduate degrees.

"I've had over six years of advanced education valued at over half a million dollars and still have more opportunities available to pursue a Ph.D. or part-time MBA — funded and aided by tuition assistance programs — all while still earning my full military salary."

1ST LT. / JON NOVAK / SPACE FORCE

Rebekah (right) is currently taking advantage of several educational benefits available to her, including Tuition Assistance, the GI Bill and the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program. These benefits provide approximately \$20,000 annually toward her education fees.

"It's incredibly helpful to have federal and state assistance for tuition, books, materials and laboratory fees, especially if you're attending a private college or university."

SPC. / REBEKAH HARDACRE / OHIO ARMY NATIONAL GUARD



Access to higher education prompted Cpl. Ethan Rubenbauer to complete his undergraduate degree in cybersecurity — an interest that was piqued through his military experiences.

"I'm currently using Tuition Assistance, which is really convenient because it covers the cost of my courses and allows me to finish my degree while serving. As a bonus, I plan to pursue a master's degree using the GI Bill, which will cover the entire tuition."

CPL. / ETHAN RUBENBAUER / MARINE CORPS

EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS



Student Loan Repayment Programs

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

\$60K

The Military has several medical-specific financial assistance programs that pay 100% of tuition and an average of \$60K a year to attend classes and study, as well as provide a housing stipend.³

The Post-9/11 GI Bill

pays all public school in-state tuition and fees and provides a living stipend for housing based on location and a \$1,000 allowance for books and supplies.¹

These benefits are available to Active Duty, Reserve and Guard members. Benefits are based on length of service (a minimum of 90 days) and can be shared with family members.¹

“ I’m going to save my GI Bill for my children because they can benefit from it. My daughter already knows what she wants to do and plans on pursuing an MBA like I am.”

MSGT. / SHAKEYNA SMITH / AIR FORCE RESERVE



Tuition Assistance

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

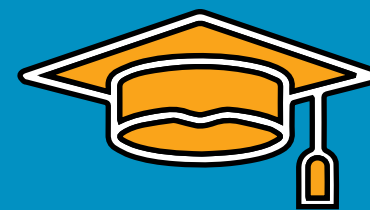
\$150B IN GRANTS

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



“ The Military has given me an opportunity every single year to apply for Tuition Assistance and keep seeking career development outside of the Military. I’m using it to get my bachelor’s degree in criminal justice.”

STAFF SGT. / JUAN CANAS / ARMY



College Fund Programs

are offered to eligible service members when they first join the Military. These programs offer an additional amount of money that can be added to the Post-9/11 GI Bill.¹

Incentives and amounts received will vary by Service, and while each branch 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

Fast Fact

In addition to financial benefits to help service members achieve their education goals, the Military has many programs that work with colleges and universities to accept recommended college credits based on military training and experience.



WORK PERKS

From paid vacation time to generous health care, the financial benefits of military service go far beyond a paycheck



“When my fiancée and I got engaged, we sat with a marriage specialist and practiced skills we’ll use in our marriage, like communication, financial management and handling deployment as a couple. Through Military OneSource, we got lessons at no cost and can call back to get more whenever we want.”

1ST LT. / **JON NOVAK** / SPACE FORCE

“The cost of civilian health care is no joke! Not having to worry about a bill during medical appointments with military health care is such a relief. I had my wisdom teeth extracted and never saw a bill for that.”

STAFF SGT. / **REX HEARN** / ARIZONA AIR NATIONAL GUARD



Daisy (right) hikes with her boyfriend in her hometown.

“I was fortunate enough to learn about the VA home loan, a program that helps service members buy a home, typically without a down payment, and be able to buy property. It’s a financial investment for my future.”

2ND LT. / **DAISY AGUILAR** / ARMY RESERVE



“In my free time, I love boxing on base. The gym is perfect for my personal workouts — it’s huge and beautiful. There’s a cardio room, a basketball court, a weight room, a racquetball court, spin bikes — there are so many amenities on base!”

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER / **ARIANNE GUNN** / COAST GUARD

Though not all service members live on base, they can all take advantage of the amenities, like:



MOVIE THEATERS



BOWLING ALLEYS



GROCERY STORES



LIBRARIES



RESTAURANTS



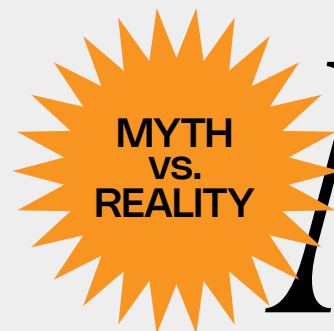
VETERINARY SERVICES

In addition to on-base recreation, such as youth programs, intramural sports and club activities, service members have access to resources that promote well-being and mindfulness.

Bases also provide many amenities designed for families, including community pools and splash pads, parks and playgrounds, art centers, and performance venues.

Learn more about things to do on base:





MILITARY MISCONCEPTIONS

MYTH
Boot Camp Is Impossible



REALITY

"Before I joined, I wasn't sure if Basic Training would be too intimidating or demanding. I was happy that I didn't feel that way at the end of it. The best part was bonding with the people I graduated with because we completed this massive accomplishment together."

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER
ARIANNE GUNN
COAST GUARD

MYTH
You Can't Seek Mental Health Support



REALITY

"Many people think that if you ask for help, you'll get kicked out of the Military. That's not true at all — I'm proof of that. I've used available resources to talk to someone about mental health, and now I advocate for others to do the same."

STAFF SGT.
REX HEARN
ARIZONA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

MYTH
You Have No Personal Life



REALITY

"When joining the Military, I thought that's all I'd be focusing on, day in and day out, no matter what. I was surprised to find out you have a lot of free time to expand your knowledge and pursue your passions."

CPL.
ETHAN RUBENBAUER
MARINE CORPS

MYTH
It's College or the Military



REALITY

"A lot of people think, 'If I join the Military, I can't go to college.' That doesn't have to be the case — you can pursue that opportunity if you're interested. I plan to use Tuition Assistance when I go back to college for my master's degree."

2ND LT.
DAISY AGUILAR
ARMY RESERVE

MYTH
There Are Only Combat Roles



REALITY

"Many military roles are noncombat positions, such as doctors, engineers and administrative staff. The Military functions like a machine and needs these roles to ensure everything runs smoothly."

PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS
JULIAN BEDFORD
NAVY

MYTH
There Are No Opportunities for Women



REALITY

"From the start, I was given leadership opportunities in the Military, like being chosen to instruct my platoon during Basic Training. That was a moment I was really proud of. As the youngest female in the group at the time, my sergeants gave me the valuable opportunity to lead peers of different ages and ranks, male or female."

SPC.
REBEKAH HARDACRE
OHIO ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

LIFE IN THE MILITARY

Your free time is yours; while off the clock, service members spend time with family, volunteer and pursue personal interests



In Key West, Florida, the various Service branches work together to mentor local students, a program Army Staff Sgt. Juan Canas was eager to volunteer for when he arrived.

"I get to walk high school students through challenges and prepare them for life after high school, from saving money to choosing a career they're passionate about. It's so fulfilling to invest time in them."

STAFF SGT. / **JUAN CANAS** / ARMY



While attending college, MSgt. Shakeyna Smith (left) learned about the Air Force Reserve and saw a part-time commitment as the perfect opportunity to serve, go to school and be present in her children's lives.

"At the dinner table, we chat about the highlights of our day and what we're grateful for. Spending time with my kids keeps me energized and helps me enjoy life."

MSGT. / **SHAKEYNA SMITH** / AIR FORCE RESERVE

Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Julian Bedford enjoys writing poetry as an outlet for his creativity.

"Poetry gives me the ability to tell a story and express my emotions. You can explain so much using so few words — that's the beauty of poetry."

PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS / **JULIAN BEDFORD** / NAVY



Ohio Army National Guard Spc. Rebekah Hardacre wears many hats, one of which is the 2023 Ohio Fairs' Queen crown.

"As contestants, we have to give on-the-spot answers to randomly selected questions. My military experience helped me in the pageant world because it gave me the fundamentals to communicate confidently and authentically with short preparation."



Rebekah with Ohio's governor and first lady.

SPC. / **REBEKAH HARDACRE** / OHIO ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

THRIVE WHERE YOU SERVE

Broaden your horizons — literally and figuratively — and expand your worldview in the numerous and diverse locations the Military can take you



Beyond being based in mountainous Colorado, Jon has enjoyed travel opportunities he received through the Space Force.

"I've been all over the globe for conferences that my leadership thinks will benefit me in my career. I got to go to Boston, Hong Kong, California and Florida, to name a few."

1ST LT. / JON NOVAK / SPACE FORCE



did you know?

Full-time service members have access to rent-free on-base housing or housing allowances to live off base, ultimately landing them more money in their pockets for personal expenses.

Explore bases around the U.S. and the world:



Growing up in Iowa, Cpl. Rubenbauer didn't have many opportunities to surf, but since joining the Military and moving to Southern California, he's been able to get back on the board.

"The accessibility of living on Camp Pendleton — having all these beaches nearby — was my sign to give surfing another shot, and I've enjoyed it ever since. I'm a big planner, so surfing helps me live in the moment."

CPL. / ETHAN RUBENBAUER / MARINE CORPS

In the Army Reserve, Daisy serves part time close to her loved ones in Washington state.

"I'm a very family-oriented person, so I talk to them every day. I'm just a drive away, so the people closest to me have been able to see how much I've grown since joining."

2ND LT. / DAISY AGUILAR / ARMY RESERVE



Juan's service took him to a top vacation destination: Key West, Florida.

"I appreciate that once the job is done, the time left is yours to decompress and enjoy your duty station. It's always sunny and breezy here, so we love to rent paddleboards or play beach volleyball on base."

STAFF SGT. / JUAN CANAS / ARMY

BE PART OF A TEAM

Work hard and play hard with team members who help you maximize your potential



The support of her peers makes Shakeyna's work environment both productive and fun.

"I like the friendships, the morale. The people can make or break where you work. It helps to know that you're showing up alongside people you have great relationships with. It's not just a workplace, it's a family."

MSGT. / SHAKEYNA SMITH / AIR FORCE RESERVE



Jon loves his tight-knit team and being able to lean on them.

"It takes a village to make things happen, so you're always depending on other people. We eat lunch together every day, enjoy team-building outings for things like golf and hikes, and have ample time throughout the day to socialize."

1ST LT. / JON NOVAK / SPACE FORCE



Julian leverages the diversity of his teammates to provide new perspectives when solving problems.

"There are so many different people from different backgrounds and cultures. I see a certain answer or way to fix things, but somebody else on my team with a different upbringing may be able to see what I can't see."

PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS / JULIAN BEDFORD / NAVY



Despite playful rivalries among the Services, Ryan recognizes the benefits of working together.

"Our job as a whole operates best in a team environment. At the end of the day, we're all part of the same team, one big family, and we support and rely on each other. It's one of the biggest things about this job I enjoy."

SENIOR AIRMAN / RYAN BODDEN / AIR FORCE

FAST FRIENDSHIPS

Get your plans out of the group chat with friendships that last a lifetime



From attending movie nights to taking exercise classes together, Shakeyna and her colleagues make time to bond and support each other outside of work.

"The people I work with are compassionate, respectful and understanding. We have a close-knit group, and we enjoy doing activities with one another, like seeing comedy shows or going out for lunch."

MSGT. / **SHAKEYNA SMITH** / AIR FORCE RESERVE



Ryan and his teammates have forged strong relationships outside their shared on-duty experiences. He met close friend and fellow Airman Ethan at Basic Training, and they've since been colocated at various bases. They enjoy hiking, riding ATVs, playing video games with other colleagues and spending time at White Sands National Park, which is close to where they train.

"The friendships I've made in the Military so far are for life."

SENIOR AIRMAN / **RYAN BODDEN** / AIR FORCE

When Arianne and her colleagues aren't in a fast-paced kitchen environment, they enjoy spending time outdoors, having casual cookouts and exploring new restaurants — especially ones where her Siberian husky, Boozer, is able to tag along.

"My friends also have dogs, so we like to do things in places where they can join us. We'll meet up at the dog park or try new restaurants together."

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER / **ARIANNE GUNN** / COAST GUARD



Key West, Florida, provides the perfect environment for Juan and his co-workers to get outside and participate in sports tournaments, which are organized through recreation programs aimed at promoting service members' morale and well-being. These tournaments provide an opportunity to build friendships and foster a sense of unity with one another outside the office.

"I'm a competitive person, so I always take advantage of volleyball and table tennis events."

STAFF SGT. / **JUAN CANAS** / ARMY

Skills for SUCCESS

Build a rewarding future by starting with a solid foundation from the Military



Clear Communication

As a Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) specialist, Air Force Senior Airman Ryan Bodden effectively advises leadership and fellow service members on how to be dedicated liaisons to Army partners. He's learned to shift strategies quickly, giving clear direction to his team. "When working with another Service branch, being able to communicate next steps clearly, integrate within any group and adapt to all situations are critical to our ability to perform our duties as TACP specialists."



Collaboration

Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Julian Bedford's role as an IT technician has allowed him to work with diverse groups of people. He's been empowered to engage with team members and sees the importance and results of partnership and community. "I feel like the Military has given me a better understanding of teamwork. I was very much a lone wolf when I first joined ... introverted and very quiet. The Military brought me out of my shell."

Public Speaking

As a culinary specialist and a course leader, Chief Petty Officer Arianne Gunn oversees staff and students at Coast Guard Training Center Petaluma in California. Both roles have helped her step out of her comfort zone and overcome a fear of public speaking. "My confidence in presenting to an audience, managing personnel and emotional intelligence skyrocketed when new recruits were placed under my care. I'm still self-conscious, but by hurling myself into different roles at work, it's like nothing to me now."



Organization

Air Force Reserve MSgt. Shakeyna Smith's role as an aviation resource management specialist requires her to keep track of aircrew members' certificates, trainings, licenses and more. Staying informed ensures her team is operationally ready and safe to fly. "One of the biggest skills I developed was management. It directly translated to having organization in my home, caring for my children and handling my finances. And it taught me how to set boundaries so I can prioritize tasks and monitor my own time while supporting so many team members."



Composure

Ohio Army National Guard Spc. Rebekah Hardacre learned how to remain calm and maintain composure during high-pressure situations. Now she's able to easily transfer these honed skills to her personal life and civilian role as a veterinary lab assistant. "Being in a controlled stressful environment during Basic Training put me in a position to learn how to manage my own stress and emotions. Having leaders available to provide support and guidance during those tough trainings really helped prepare me for similar challenging situations in life."



Time Management

While serving as an air defense battle management system operator, Army Staff Sgt. Juan Canas is also working toward his bachelor's degree online at the American Military University. With his busy schedule, he has developed ways to efficiently balance working full time, studying and volunteering as a mentor to high school students. "Time management is a major skill the Military has helped me develop. Planning things out — from a day to as far as 30 days — helps keep me in check to accomplish my work and my personal goals."



BEYOND BASIC TRAINING

Service members get a jump on developing extraordinary resumes with access to technical courses and certifications that transfer to the civilian world

"I always thought the Military was just Basic Training, but it's so much more than that. Our leaders try their best to tailor our trainings toward whatever roles we have on the civilian side so we can apply our capabilities both in our civilian jobs and in the Army Reserve."

2ND LT. / **DAISY AGUILAR** / ARMY RESERVE

During her time as an ROTC student, Daisy attended a two-week training where she learned about documentation, data and pay. After graduation, she applied for a civilian job as a human resources specialist, and, due to her military training, her skills were sharp enough that they hired her on the spot.

"I'm certified to transport hazardous materials like ammunition or fuel, operate heavy equipment and larger vehicles, and detect counter-unmanned aircraft systems. Outside of the Military, these credentials will translate to the civilian world and help create opportunities to pursue similar careers once I decide to leave."

STAFF SGT. / **JUAN CANAS** / ARMY

Juan accelerates his professional growth through the technical classes required in the air defense operator career path. To get promoted, Juan and his co-workers can earn additional certifications that build on one another so they can become subject matter experts in their field.

"I got to attend the New England Culinary Institute and completed courses about nutrition, baking, table service and even wine tasting. These went a step beyond the beginner principles of cooking, and all of the knowledge from those trainings helped prepare me for my job today — like a mosaic of all these different skills."

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER / **ARIANNE GUNN** / COAST GUARD

As a culinary specialist at the culinary "A" School, Arianne teaches up-and-coming students the fundamentals of cooking. Once her students graduate, they further their skills through on-the-job training in fast-paced kitchens and more advanced trainings and certifications.

"I got my CompTIA A+ certification, which proves I've mastered the conditions, rules and security systems to work in IT. That's the baseline certification for any IT job, in or out of the Military. I could spend hundreds or thousands of dollars in the civilian world pursuing these trainings, but there are so many that are free through Navy COOL."

The Navy Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (COOL) program helps service members find relevant certifications and licenses for their career fields.

PETTY OFFICER 3RD CLASS / **JULIAN BEDFORD** / NAVY

Professional education has been invaluable to Julian and his role as an IT technician. He's able to apply his hours working and training in the Navy to earn certifications that will transfer to the civilian side if he decides to leave the Military.

Making an Impact

In the Military, you can leave a lasting impression on your team, your community and even the world

FEEDING THE FORCE

Earlier in her career as a culinary specialist, Coast Guard Chief Petty Officer Arianne Gunn was responsible for providing nutritious meals to the crew, from budgeting and food shopping to menu planning and cooking. Now, in her role overseeing Culinary Specialist "A" School, she supports students early in their careers as they learn the building blocks to work confidently in fast-paced kitchens.

Throughout their 13 weeks at "A" School in Northern California, culinary students learn the fundamental principles of cooking, like sauteing and simmering, as well as more advanced skills, like meat cutting. As course chief, Arianne develops the curriculum, assigns students to advisers and helps them prepare for graduation and their next assignments.

Arianne's students go on to impact many people through their culinary skills. Food is fuel and, especially in the Military, well-balanced, diverse and timely meals are crucial. "The kitchen constantly has a running clock," Arianne says. "You have three deadlines — breakfast, lunch and dinner — and if the crew is late to eat, it can knock their days, not to mention their missions, off schedule."

While students learn a breadth of techniques, they always find time for what Arianne calls "shenanigans" in the training kitchens. "When I walk through the galleys to see what the students are working on — grilling this morning's French toast, preparing chicken curry for lunch — the positive energy is contagious," she says. "And you'd better believe between tasks I'm asking for taste tests of everything!"



SHRIMP & GRITS

Arianne's signature dish is shrimp and grits. It's her go-to menu item to make when hosting dignitaries at work and when her mom comes to visit.

GET THE RECIPE HERE:



“Students start with all different levels of experience, many without a culinary background, so it’s fulfilling to watch their kitchen confidence skyrocket over time.”

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER /
ARIANNE GUNN /
COAST GUARD



Ryan (right) and a fellow Airman survey the range ahead of a mission start.

STRONGER TOGETHER

Among the many career paths in the Military, some roles require specialized training and unique skills to get the job done. Senior Airman Ryan Bodden belongs to a highly trained group called Tactical Air Control Party (TACP), a component of Air Force Special Warfare.

TACP teams embed with units on the front lines, advising on the use of ammunition from aircraft, space assets and even Navy vessels to ensure friendly troops remain out of harm's way. Ryan and his team are known as the premier experts on airpower and advise commanders across the Services on the best ways to employ airstrikes during dire

missions. "We are a key link that connects the Services, so we have a hand in defending multiple domains: air, ground, space and cyberspace," Ryan says.

Because the work they do is highly specialized, Ryan and his co-workers continuously push each other to be the best they can be. "We keep each other motivated and accountable," he says. "We're very honest with the feedback we give to one another so we can continue to grow together, which is critical to our mission of keeping people on the ground safe."

“One of our most important functions is ensuring everyone has situational awareness throughout the mission so people are safe both in the air and on the ground.”

SENIOR AIRMAN / RYAN BODDEN / AIR FORCE



Cpl. Rubenbauer (far right) leads MCMAP training.

GOING TO THE MAT

Beyond his role as a cyberspace warfare operator monitoring and safeguarding the Marine Corps network from cybersecurity threats, Cpl. Ethan Rubenbauer took on additional responsibilities as a Marine Corps Martial Arts Program (MCMAP) instructor.

Before starting their official duties for the day, Marines can join Cpl. Rubenbauer on the athletic field on base, where he guides them through exercises, obstacles and techniques for combat readiness. The MCMAP combines a variety of hand-to-hand combat styles, focusing on the physical and mental aspects of martial arts to encourage team building, morale, resilience and stress management.

"Some of these Marines start with almost no experience, and I get to see them build on their skills throughout the course and become more dedicated to martial arts," he says. "It's so rewarding as an instructor to see them graduate from the program with a sense of newfound confidence."

“On a personal level, I see these Marines carry the self-assurance they gain through martial arts training into their careers. It helps them believe in their abilities and leadership skills.”

CPL. / ETHAN RUBENBAUER / MARINE CORPS

There are more than 250 career paths available through the Military to help service members fulfill their professional goals and leave their own unique marks on the world.



INTELLIGENCE



ENGINEERING



COMBAT OPERATIONS



HEALTH CARE



COMMUNICATIONS



HUMAN RESOURCES



MY JOURNEY

Discover what led these service members to join

2ND LT.
DAISY AGUILAR
ARMY RESERVE



CHILD

Daisy was raised on a farm in Washington state, where she spent a lot of time outdoors with her family. They enjoyed fun activities like apple and cherry picking and walking trails. Her agricultural upbringing allowed her to discover and appreciate a love of nature.



TEEN

In high school, Daisy decided to join the Military after learning she'd be able to continue her education while serving part time in the Reserve. Her parents were initially hesitant but came around after hearing more about the educational and leadership opportunities Daisy would have. At the University of Washington, she joined ROTC, which included having her tuition covered and a monthly stipend for school, ultimately supporting her path to becoming an Army Reserve officer.



TODAY

As a quartermaster officer, Daisy tracks and distributes crucial items like night-vision goggles, radios and trucks for fellow service members to use during their trainings and missions. She also leads up to 50 junior Soldiers during drill weekends, organizing training exercises and ensuring her team is well prepared for their duties.

"I really enjoy being able to give back in my role by being a mentor to Soldiers and passing on my knowledge. It feels full circle because I've had officers who've shaped me during my service, and now I can offer that same guidance and support to others."

CPL. / **ETHAN RUBENBAUER** / MARINE CORPS



CHILD

Cpl. Rubenbauer grew up on a small farm in Iowa, where he helped his family with daily chores, yard maintenance and handiwork around the house. After school, he enjoyed hanging out with friends who lived on farms nearby and had livestock to care for. These experiences instilled a valuable work ethic in him.



TEEN

Following high school, Cpl. Rubenbauer spent time working on ranches. Looking for a change, he was eager to pursue a career in a new, interesting field: cyberspace. He felt that joining the Marine Corps was the best way to expand his knowledge and reach his goals.

"I really value seeing the Military push service members to grow and strive in all situations, whether it's through training or professional development opportunities."

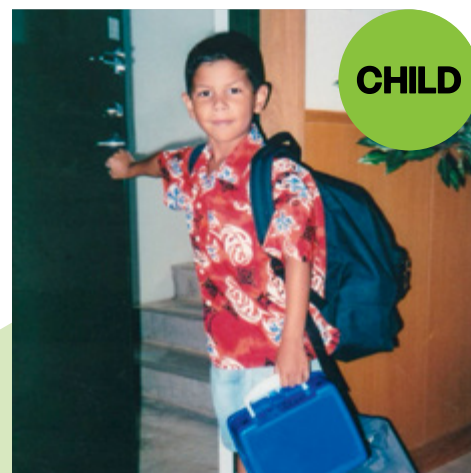


TODAY

As a cyberspace warfare operator, Cpl. Rubenbauer monitors networks and servers to ensure they're safeguarded from external threats. He enjoys keeping his skills sharp by taking cyber tests and working on simulation challenges with his team.

"I'm always excited to tell my family that I am getting industry-leading certifications. It's rewarding to accomplish and to know they'll benefit me both in and out of the Military."

SENIOR AIRMAN / **RYAN BODDEN** / AIR FORCE



CHILD

Growing up with his dad serving in the Air Force, Ryan and his family had the opportunity to live in such diverse places as Florida, Kansas, England and Japan. No matter where he lived, Ryan always found himself playing outside with his friends. They enjoyed riding bikes, going for walks and exploring the town together.



TEEN

Ryan didn't initially consider joining the Military; however, one day he tagged along with a friend to support them during a recruiter visit and was so engaged by the discussion of what the Air Force offered that he decided to join.

"I really looked forward to being a part of a supportive team where I would have the opportunity to build on my leadership skills, boost my confidence and stay motivated."



TODAY

Ryan's role as a Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) specialist allows him to advise and assist ground commanders across the Services during air support missions. Serving as a key liaison, he communicates clear direction, shares real-time information and offers guidance to his fellow service members to ensure operational success.



With over 250 career options, the Military offers endless opportunities for professional and personal development. Learn how to start your journey today.

"The Military is a route for developing **CHARACTER**, leadership, hard and soft **SKILLS**, and **RESPONSIBILITY**.
Joining wasn't just about what I wanted to do, it was about **WHO I WANTED TO BE.**"

1ST LT. / JON NOVAK / SPACE FORCE

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