



Petty Officer 2nd class Kyle Ghere from the Eastern Indianapolis Navy recruitment center  
Ava Brawley photo



"I want to join the military to make my family proud."  
senior  
Ethan Reed



"I want to join the military to continue the family legacy."  
senior  
AJ Sheets



"I want to join the military to stay in shape and serve our country."  
senior  
Jeremiah Carter



"If I were to join, it would be to experience other parts of the world."  
junior  
Zaire Gillis

# Air Force



By Sam Thompson  
sports editor

Many students are feeling the stress of college, but they can get away by flying high in the sky for the Air Force. Most people think of the Air Force as jets, planes and helicopters, but the Air Force has more to offer.

"I have been working in the Air Force for 14 years, and I have earned an electrical engineering degree from the Air Force. There are so many careers outside of flying in the Air Force, like medics, civil engineers and careers in the computer science field," TSgt Zachariah Gandy said.

For some students, this is a great place to look for a good career.

"The Air Force has been a great starter for me as I have been here for a year and a half and I am already halfway through my degree while I am working as an aerospace medical technician. They have already helped me earn money by working with the skills I already have and building them through degrees," AFSC Alexander Valdes-Scantling said.

College can be a daunting bill for many students, and the Air Force is a way to conquer the towering cost of education.

"The Air Force offers the most Associate's degrees out of any other branch, and I used this to get my engineering degree while I was in the Air Force. The Air Force members have the opportunity to complete up to 47 credit hours for college after time in the branch. Along with that, the military helps pay for college if another degree is wanted after service," Gandy said.

The Air Force gives so many opportunities that cannot be found anywhere else or with any other career.

"I have been able to travel the world and start my career all while being paid by the Air Force. I have been to all parts of the world; I really think I have one of the greatest jobs in the world," Gandy said.

Many people are driven away from the military because of fear, but this should not be the case because although it is hard, it can be worth it.

"I found after joining the Air Force that the basic training is not as hard as people think it is, and I'm very glad I joined because I wasn't sure what I wanted to be. My job has turned out to be great for me, and, hopefully, after I earn my degree, it will only get better. I have also learned so much from my mentors in the Air Force, and I have met so many friends. The Air Force was a great decision for me," Valdez-Scantling said.

Many students have dug themselves in a hole academically and personally, and the Air Force is the perfect way to turn rough lives around.

"The Air Force changed my life tremendously. I was a bad influence as a friend, I never listened, and I was always getting into trouble, but the Air Force turned my life around and gave me a great career. I have been able to do amazing things. The Air Force also helped me meet my wife, and I was able to marry her in Germany because of the Air Force," Gandy said.

# Coast Guard



By Malakai Cruse  
reporter

The Coast Guard is the smallest branch of the military. They are responsible for saving thousands of lives and enforcing laws all along the coasts and Great Lakes.

The Coast Guard is a unique branch and is the only branch where recruits can join while being fully paid without choosing their specific jobs/rates.

"What makes us different from any other branch of the military is that you can join as a non-rate, then pick your job when you're in, so you can be enlisted and fully being paid as an active member and choose your job later," Petty Officer First Class Julie Lowe said.

When looking at the process to enlist, the Coast Guard is as standard as any other military branch.

"To join, you'll have to go through MEPS (Military Entrance Processing Stations) to get physically cleared. You'll also have to take the ASVAB to test your mental strengths and weaknesses as well as determine what jobs you're fit for," Lowe said.

A key difference for the Coast Guard and one of its attractive aspects is the fact they do not deploy overseas. In fact, the closest Coast Guard stations are located around Lake Michigan, less than a four-hour drive from Greenwood. "The Coast Guard is good for people looking to not be deployed. We don't deploy overseas. We're not a combat service. We're a lifesaving and law enforcement service within the US. Quality of life is a lot better here," Lowe said.

While being mainly US based, there are exceptions as to where personnel can be stationed.

"I have been stationed in Australia, Japan, Malaysia and Taiwan for specific missions as an IAT (Information Assurance Technical), and we don't have bases like other branches, but we have jobs in Puerto Rico and Guam," Information Assurance Technician Ben Keffer said.

The Coast Guard is known for being a second career choice for military personnel after serving their 4 - 6 years in their respective branches.

"The Coast Guard has the highest retention rate of any military branch, meaning that the average person that joins the Coast Guard stays longer than the average person at any other military branch, and many people transfer to the Coast Guard after their first contract at the Army or Navy or whatever it might be. Quality of life is untouched in the Coast Guard," Keffer said.

# Navy



By Ava Ryan  
reporter

Joining the Navy is a big decision.

As a high school student, the idea of joining the Navy may seem daunting, but it can also be an exciting opportunity for adventure and personal growth.

"One of the first steps to joining the Navy is to do your research, gather information and talk with your family about the different career opportunities available," Petty Officer 2nd class Kyle Ghere said.

There is a never-ending list of questions students should think about before enlisting.

"The Navy is like many other career opportunities. You get out what you put in it. If you have a great attitude and can follow directions, it is quite easy. Do not get me wrong, it does have its challenges, but the Navy will guide you where they want and need you to go. You just need to listen and do what is expected. Whether you decide to do one tour or become a lifer, you can do the bare minimum of what is expected and have a mediocre experience, or you can look for and take advantage of opportunities that will provide education, accelerated advancement and a very rewarding career," Petty Officer 1st class Greg Young said.

Asking for help in the decision-making process is the best option.

"Once you have a better understanding of the various career options, the next step is to meet with a Navy recruiter. Recruiters are knowledgeable about the Navy and can provide you with information about the application process, eligibility requirements and training programs," Ghere said.

There are always going to be elements that are expected when joining the military.

"I was surprised to learn that the Navy was a microcosm of our society. While I knew it would be composed of people from all over the country, I did not expect them to be from all walks of life: poor, middle class, wealthy, farmers, former gang members, college attendees, etc. Everyone had their own reason for joining, and those reasons varied. But the great thing about it was that once a unit was formed, none of those things mattered. We were all equal, especially in the eyes of the Navy, and had to have each others' backs," Young said.

Whether working on a ship, at a naval base or overseas, the Navy can provide opportunities to travel, meet new people and gain valuable experience.

"Joining the Navy is not just a job. It is a commitment to serving your country and protecting the freedoms we all enjoy. It is a chance to be part of something bigger than yourself and make a difference in the world. If you are willing to work hard, stay dedicated and embrace new challenges, joining the Navy can be a rewarding and fulfilling experience that will stay with you for a lifetime," Ghere said.

# Army



By Kolton Pauley  
reporter

From boot camp to missions, soldiers are some of the bravest people on the planet.

To be in the Army, first people have to sign up and be selected to join. Next, they have to go through boot camp to ensure they are physically set to be in the Army. After that, they will go through weeks of training. Soldiers have a lot of advice for high schoolers thinking about joining.

"There is never a bad time to join as long as you actually care about the job you are doing. As long as you care, you're teachable and can work on physical fitness when you get here. There are good and bad aspects of the job, speaking from a combat arms side. It's not fun in the moment. Most of the time you're carrying a ruck that's way too heavy through bad terrain and then sleeping in a muddy hole if you get

# Marines



By Hailey Hargraves  
reporter

Joining the Marines is a daring decision. The Marines are a branch of the United States military that specializes in protecting the air, land and sea.

Students in their senior year can apply to military programs and will have a year to prepare for military training.

"I think my recruiters did a pretty good job training me, especially because there is something called the Delayed Entry Program where you have at least a year out if you join your senior year to be able to prepare you for the riggers of recruit training," Sergeant Derek Marksberry said.

People should be committed when looking to join the Marines, though.

"On the outside looking in or being a recruiter now in my shoes, my advice would be to have that level of commitment to want to seek it out or go all the way through," Marksberry said. "Trust your level of commitment and be open and honest if you are talking to recruiters about what you mean or what your intentions are."

Talking and asking questions is a good way to figure out options.

"If you are on the edge or you don't know, walking through the door isn't going to scan and enlist," he said. "Seeing your options is not a bad thing, so sit down with somebody, ask questions and figure out what it is you want and see if they can make that happen for you."

Influences, such as family and friends, can steer people towards joining the military.

"I grew up in a military family. My dad was in the National Guard for over 22 years," he said. "He pushed me towards the Marines because of the brotherhood and because of what I experienced growing up and playing sports, wrestling and football."

The brotherhood in the Marines is a huge factor of people enlisting.

"I think the brotherhood and the connections you make is what really drove me to want to do something like this," Marksberry said. "I talk to most of the people I came in contact with at every point in my career to this day. I still have a group chat with my boot camp platoon, my first unit, my second unit and my current unit."

The connections are a strong foundation to lean on in and out of the corps.

"All the connections that you make, you are going to keep them along the way, and all that gives you networking capabilities," Marksberry said. "I know that if I am ever stuck anywhere or if I am anywhere in the US or in other countries, I have someone I can call or someone I can count on that is there for me. The connections I made are insane, and I wouldn't change it for anything."

The lack of females in the Marines causes a challenging working environment for women.

"I was a part of air wing MWSS371, which is a station in Yuma, Arizona, and the squadron is probably about 500 or 600 people, so it is pretty small, but out of that, there are about 24 females total," Lance Corporal Michelle Roberts said. "I was the first female the shop had in six years, so most of these people had never worked with a female before so most of these people didn't know what to do."

When joining the Marines, women should avoid trying to fit in with the guys, according to Roberts.

"Be smart about what you do. A lot of females get into the military, especially the Marine Corps, and they make really bad decisions on the front end because they want to fit in with the guys," she said. "The females who don't [try to fit in with the guys] make it far, and the ones that do [try to fit in with the guys] don't."

Women in the Marines should find what they enjoy and stick with it.

"There is never going to be a point where you can prove yourself. You have an expectation that you need to prove yourself to the wrong people. By doing your work and doing the best you can, you really do prove yourself to the people who matter," she said. "Find your niche, find something you're good at, and stick with it because that is what will get you noticed."

sleep at all. But the fun part is to reminisce on it with the guys you did it with. It's all about being out there with your boys. Don't do it for you; do it for them. It's all about your attitude. Some people get here and get all in their heads, and they are miserable their whole contract. You just have to be grateful for the opportunities you get while you're in and stay motivated," SPC Jeremy Green, who is stationed in Romania, said. Being in the Army can create many good memories to offset the challenging ones.

"Some of my favorite memories of being in the Army are the bonds I built with the people I went through training camp with and the people I met while I served. Another good memory was when I graduated boot camp and became an official in the Army," former PVT. Pauley said. Pauley retired in 2020 during the pandemic.

After retiring or separating from the Army, many soldiers take their skills back into the workforce.

"Unless your goal is to do 20 years and retire from the Army, join a job in the Army that will transfer your experience to the civilian workforce, setting yourself up for success following the military," SPC Brody Burgeson said.

Picking a short contract might be wise for new enlistees.

"Do a three-year contract. Anything more might make you regret it if you don't like being where you are at," Spc (P) Devin Cabrera said.

Joining the Army is jumping into a whirlpool of triumphs, challenges and everything in between. But the rewards often involve bonds soldiers build, good pay and plenty of benefits. Most people join the Army to protect their country and fight for their loved ones.

"Just getting into the Army is the hardest part, but after that, it is also very tough. Being away from family and friends for a long time is very challenging, but protecting them is what matters most. It is very taxing on your body, though, and you take the risk of dying. I am very happy I joined the Army and served my country proudly," Pauley said.

Many presidents have worn the uniform proudly. "One thing not a lot of people know about being in the Army is that a majority of presidents actually served and wore the uniform. We get to meet most presidents since we are the ones protecting this country. My favorite one I met was Obama," Pauley said.

Some join because they do not know what they want to do with their lives and the military seemed to offer them a good place to start.

"I didn't have any direction in life, and I wanted to figure it out," Cabrera said.