

# Marching toward the military

By **Cheyenne Collins** and **Ariel Lucas**

FOCUS talked to seniors joining the Navy, Army, National Guard and Marines, and some are well on their way to already being in the armed services.

For example, senior **Tyler Sigmon** enlisted in the National Guard on May 10 at MEPS, the Military Entrance Processing Station. MEPS determines whether an applicant is eligible for military service, and Sigmon got the all clear.

"There are a lot of benefits," Sigmon said. The Army National Guard provides a monthly salary, health care, and money for college or vocational training through the GI Bill.

I am in the Army National Guard and one benefit that they have over the regular army is that you only have to attend on-base drill one weekend every month and two weeks a year for training."

Those in the National Guard still have the same physical and mental requirements as full-time Army soldiers, but National Guardsmen and women have a dual service role. Their governor can call them into service to help with a state disaster or the federal government can enlist them to aid in a national or international emergency, such as an invasion or an enormous earthquake.

"I'm looking forward to serving because it's going to open up many opportunities for me to succeed and to set up the best possible future for me."

-Senior **Zack Konieczny**

After the events of 9/11, nearly one third of our National Guard was sent to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Another branch that has attracted PMHS student recruits is the Army. "I wanted to set up my future," said senior **Zack Konieczny**. "And the Army was the first step."

He called the Army his "stepping stone" toward other life goals and success. "I'm looking forward to serving because it's going to open up many opportunities for me to succeed and to set up the best possible future for me."

Another soon-to-be soldier is senior **Lexie Julbert**. She believes that being in the army will push her to reach her full

potential in physical and mental strength. It is a chance to start fresh and grow, she said.

"I decided to go into the



Senior **Lexie Julbert**

Army so that I could have my college paid for and get closer to my ultimate career goal which is to be in the FBI."

With that in mind, Julbert hopes to apply for the Army Criminal Investigation Command (CID) while in active service, after completing the required 60 semester hours of college.

More than 150 jobs and training in each specialty make up the Army, the oldest military branch. Active duty Army

benefits include free housing, medical care and educational opportunities. Soldiers can make extra money if they are deployed or get flight, diving or medical training.

Senior **Byron Kulik** comes from a family with military ties, including the Army. But he decided on a different branch. "I'll be the first Marine in my family."

He is excited to travel and start learning.

When there is an international crisis, the Marines are often deployed first. They also survey land, protect ships, guard embassies and gather intelligence as a faction of the Navy.

Marines have free health-care, housing allowances, tuition assistance and 30 paid vacation days a year. Specialty



Senior **Bryon Kulik**

"It is a great feeling that you are defending your friends, family and the rest of Americans across the country."

-Senior **Brandon Dodson**

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-Senior **Lexie Julbert**

fields common within the branch are jobs in communication, intelligence, broadcasting and aircraft defense. A lot of these jobs are in conjunction with the Navy.

Senior **Brandon Dodson** enlisted a year ago in the Navy. He is excited that he is joining the branch soon after graduation — in June. He said he is looking forward to making new friends, learning a new career. He knows the Navy will make him a better man which he wants to do for himself and to make his family proud.

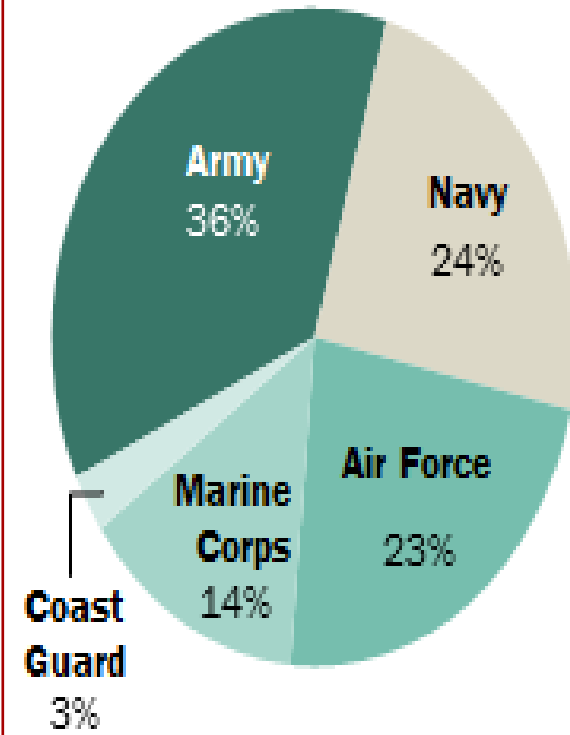
The Navy protects America's coasts and corresponding waters. Sailors make sure that U.S. territories are safe and keep watch for invasion by sea. There are several different fleets of ships with varied responsibilities. The Navy also has an important role in transporting resources to other military branches, such as fuel or dry goods.

"It is an amazing opportunity," Dodson said.

"It is a great feeling that you are defending your friends, family and the rest of Americans across the country."

## Active-duty service by branch of military

% of all U.S. active-duty personnel in each branch, 2015

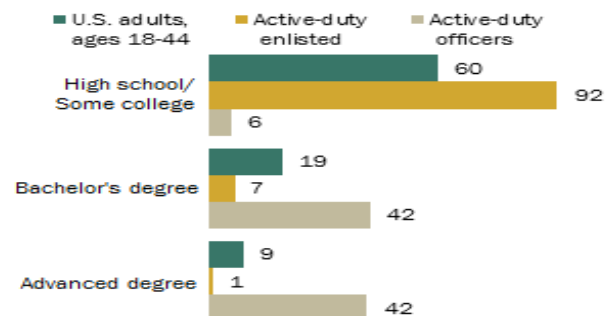


Source: Defense Department "2015 Demographics: Profile of the Military Community" report.

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## Roughly four-in-ten active-duty officers have an advanced degree

% of \_\_\_\_ by educational attainment, 2015



Note: Includes only the four military branches of the Department of Defense. The 12% of adults ages 18-44 and less than 0.5% of enlisted personnel and officers without a high school diploma are not shown. Educational attainment is not known for 0.6% of enlisted personnel and 9.7% of officers.

Source: Active-duty enlisted and officer data from Defense Department "2015 Demographics: Profile of the Military Community" report. U.S. adult data from 2015 American Community Survey (IPUMS).

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