

National Guard - Specialist (SPC) Alexandra Curtis



Alexandra Curtis of Warwick, RI enlisted in the Rhode Island Army National Guard in March of 2017. She is currently serving as a Human Resources Specialist in the 115th Military Police Company. Allie won the title of Miss Rhode Island 2015 and was named a Quality of Life award finalist at the Miss America 2016 competition for her work with her platform "Leading Ladies: Equipping Young Women With the Skills to Lead." Allie graduated summa cum laude from Syracuse University with a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Public Relations. In 2017, she received both her MPA from Brown University and her Masters Of Science Degree, from Salve Regina University's Administration of Justice and Homeland Security program, where she focused on cyber security and intelligence. SPC Curtis has worked as a Star Fellow in Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen's office in support of a nonprofit organization which trains young women for political leadership.

National Guard - Captain (Capt.) Nilofar Johnson



Nilofar Johnson is a first-generation American who emigrated from Afghanistan. Her family sought safety by moving to Pakistan, then to New York, and eventually settled in small town Pipestone, Minnesota. She wanted to serve this country in a higher capacity, and as a result joined the South Dakota Air National Guard's (SDANG) 114th Fighter Wing in 1998. She enlisted and made the rank of master sergeant and was later commissioned as an officer. She now serves as the director of inspections for the SDANG. During her career, she has served in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Fire Cracker and Operation Southern Watch. A few of her notable accomplishments are: Lieutenant of the Year for the state of South Dakota; Distinguished Graduate of Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute; SDANG Airman of the Year; and Minuteman of the Year for the state of South Dakota. Capt. Johnson is the second oldest of six children in her family. Because of her influence, her two sisters served the military as well; one in SDANG and another is a West Point Academy graduate who serves in the U.S. Army.

National Guard - Sergeant First Class (SFC) Jenny D. (Beck) Bos



SFC Jenny D. (Beck) Bos, of Clarks, Nebraska, was a Nebraska Army National Guard specialist and a truck driver with the 1075th Transportation Company out of Columbus, Nebraska, when she was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor device for exceptional heroism and gallantry during an insurgent enemy ambush that occurred near Salmon Pak, Iraq, on March 20, 2005. While under attack she extracted a wounded Soldier trapped inside a damaged vehicle, moved the Soldier to safety and returned to her vehicle while under direct and indirect enemy fire and led the convoy out of the kill zone. Bos was the first female in the Nebraska Army National Guard to be awarded the Bronze Star. "I'm definitely not as shy or as reserved as I used to be," said Bos, who is now a truck driving instructor for the Nebraska Army National Guard's 3rd Battalion, 209th Regiment (Regional Training Institute). "The military has given me the confidence to step up and lend my voice when I see something or know that my point of view may be of assistance." Bos enlisted in the Nebraska Army National Guard 16 years ago. She is married with three kids and works full-time as a civilian elementary school teacher.

National Guard - Chief Warrant Officer 2 (CW2) Rose Mattie



Chandler, Arizona resident CW2 Rose Mattie is a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter pilot in the Arizona National Guard, a community mentor, and a mother of two. She followed in the footsteps of her WWII veteran grandparents and enlisted after the attacks of 9/11. Since then, she has deployed three times as an enlisted Soldier; twice to Iraq and most recently to Afghanistan as a pioneer member of the United States Army Special Operation Command's Cultural Support Team (CST). As a CST member, she was attached to several elite Special Operations Forces where she lived and operated in one of the most austere environments in Afghanistan, paving the way for full female integration into combat arms positions. After her time with the CST, she graduated Warrant Officer Basic Course and flight school, becoming one of the few female aviators in the Arizona National Guard. At home, she cherishes her time with her husband Aaron, and their two children. As a role model for her children, she takes pride in impacting her community and sharing her life experiences with local schools and the Veteran's Heritage Project, an organization whose mission connects students with veterans. Her story was published in the VHP book (Vol. 13, 2017) and is preserved in the United States Library of Congress in Washington DC. She recently earned her Bachelors degree in Business Administration and she consistently achieves perfect scores on her Army Physical Fitness Test. Her sense of service goes beyond her duties in uniform and she cares deeply about mentoring others and ensuring America's youth understand the call to service.

National Guard - Chief Warrant Officer 2 (CW2) Jessica McCormick



CW2 Jessica McCormick of the Mississippi Army National Guard (MSARNG) is a member of the Tupelo, Miss., based A Co, 1-149th Aviation Regiment. She is from Olive Branch, Miss., and serves as an AH-64D Apache Longbow pilot. She holds the distinction of being the first and only female Apache pilot in the MSARNG. In her 15 years of service, she has deployed three times to Iraq, twice while serving in the Marine Corps as a military police officer, and once as a MSARNG military police officer. She also deployed to Afghanistan as a photojournalist. She shares the desire for service with her younger sister, who served five years in the U.S. Navy. A former college softball player, McCormick was invited to play for the All-Army softball team in 2014. She is currently studying psychology at the University of Mississippi, with the intent to become a behavioral counselor for veterans. She was drawn to serve by the military's vast career possibilities and abundant opportunities to travel the world and learn about new cultures. CW2 McCormick has thoroughly enjoyed conquering the challenges she has faced throughout her career and hopes her story will inspire other women to break future barriers in combat action roles.

Marine Corps - Captain (Capt.) Vanessa McKee



I have served in the Marine Corps for 10 years and am currently serving at 1st Marine Division as a Manpower Officer. I recently returned from a nine-month deployment in support of Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq, where I served as the first female Iraqi Military Advisor as part of Task Force Al Asad. I grew up in Philadelphia, PA until I was 12 years old and then moved to Virginia Beach, VA where I was commissioned into the Marine Corps. I joined the Young Marines in middle school, Navy Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) in high school, and then competed for a scholarship at the Hampton Roads NROTC Consortium. I was inspired to join the military at a young age from the influence of my parents. My dad served in the Army during the Vietnam era and my mom was a refugee from Cambodia. My mom shared with me the atrocities her family faced while under communist control in her native country. As a mother of two sons, my service is as important to me now more than ever and passing that obligation on to the next generation. I am proud of my service and believe it is important to serve, to continue the legacy passed on to this generation. My mantra is "to be the change you want to see in the world."

The pictures above are me with the unit I was working with most recently in Iraq as well as with my sons upon my return.

Marine Corps - Corporal (Cpl) Julia E. Chenoweth



I was born in Suzhou, China and a year later I was left on a crowded street where the police took me to the local orphanage. At 14 months old, I was adopted by two loving parents, both women, and brought to the United States. I grew up in Ann Arbor, MI, and enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 2016. I knew from a young age that my family was different. It isn't every day you find two white women raising an Asian daughter. Every opportunity I had from playing sports to attending college would not have happened if I grew up in China. The safety my family felt, and the privileges I had growing up were made possible by those who went before me. I joined to give back to the country that gave everything to me. I now serve at the Assault Amphibian School (AAS) Battalion, Camp Pendleton, CA, as an Assault Amphibious Vehicle (AAV) Mechanic (2141). I've had the incredible opportunity of being one of the first females to integrate into the Amtrac community. Every day we work to maintain the vehicles that allow students to learn basic skills of operating and fixing AAVs. At the AAS Battalion we have the chance to teach and produce the future of the amphibious element of the Marine Corps and the Armed Forces.

Marine Corps - Sergeant (Sgt) Irene P. Ragland



I am originally from Arbuckle, California, joined the United States Marine Corps in May of 2010 and attended recruit training at Recruit Depot Parris Island, South Carolina. I currently have the primary Military Occupational Specialty of an Aircraft Avionics Technician, and maintain light attack helicopters such as the Cobra and Huey. As a Lance Corporal, I deployed to Afghanistan from April 2012 to September 2012, where I worked out of Camp Bastion and Camp Leatherneck. Now a Sergeant, I am currently serving on Special Duty Assignment (SDA) as a Combat Instructor. I am married to a Marine Sergeant and together we have a three year old daughter.

After high school, I had a choice; either go to college or join the military. I came from an agricultural family background and wanted to become the first in my family to do something outside of the family tradition of farming. After speaking with my older sister about joining the United States Marine Corps, I made it a reality, becoming the first in my family to serve in any branch of military service. After looking back on my decision to serve, I want people to know that becoming a Marine was the hardest and best decision I have ever made. As a Marine, you need to be mentally tough prior to recruit training. The physical aspect you can work on, but the mental aspect will make or break you.

Marine Corps - Sergeant (Sgt) Claudia Robles



I was born in Reedley, CA to parents that are both of Mexican descent who migrated to California to have a brighter future and a better life. Because of that sense of appreciation for my country, I enlisted in the Marine Corps on February 2013. I wanted to have an opportunity to serve, develop leadership skills and be a part of an organization much greater than myself.

On 3 June, 2013 I stood on the yellow footprints in Recruit Depot Parris Island, SC. Following boot camp and Marine Combat Training, I attended my Military Occupational Specialty training in Fort Lee, VA where I was trained to be a Food Service Specialist. My first duty station was III Marine Headquarters Group in Okinawa, Japan. In the spring of 2015, I attached to a unit deployment to South Korea where I supported over 600 Marines on a daily basis. In the fall 2016, I represented the Marine Corps in a highly competitive all women's softball camp, where I was the only female Marine to be awarded the All-Tournament trophy. I became one of the select few who competed on the All Marine Women's Softball Team.

My present duty station is at Marine Barracks Washington, 8th & I where I serve as a Quality Assurance Evaluator, Platoon Sergeant, training NCO, and NCOIC for the Food Service section. My desire is to become a Marine Corps Drill Instructor where I can become a force multiplier by consistently instructing recruits in the fundamentals of combat tasks and security while showing an immense amount of pride in the lifestyle of being a Marine.

Marine Corps - Staff Sergeant (SSgt) Habiba Abida



Growing up I was often told that, "you are your mother's daughter." I never understood what exactly that meant until approximately 14 years later and after joining the Marine Corps. Typical of many rebellious teenagers, it wasn't until after I had signed my enlistment papers that I called my mother to advise her of my decision. Later that evening she confided in me that one of the primary reasons she left her home country of Morocco in the early 1970s was because her father had forbid her from joining the police force. In her quest for independence she immigrated to the United States, leaving behind everything and everyone she had ever known. It is that spirit which has carried me through some of the most difficult, challenging times during my career as a United States Marine. I have been privileged to serve in a broad spectrum of fields from Motor Transport Operator, to Cryptologic Linguist in Intelligence, to becoming a member of those female Marines assigned to provide outreach operations to Iraqi women. Those responsibilities provided me the opportunity to experience both operations within the United States and in Iraq shortly after the Battle for Fallujah. The difficulties and challenges of such a rigorous deployment schedule only served to transform me into the woman I am now. Moreover, being able to deploy as a member of the first Female Engagement Teams (Lionesses) provided me with the opportunity to meet some of the most remarkable people I have ever met. Their strength, grace, and patience are traits I have long aspired to acquire and believe those traits are what aided my mother in her young journey to a foreign country. I currently serve as a Combat Instructor at the School of Infantry-East. It is, without question, the most difficult thing I have done. As a single mother, the rigorous schedule, coupled with widely varying work hours prevent me from living with my two children. But it is that separation that drives me to ensure I give my students everything I've got so my sacrifices are not in vain. The physical aspect of being a Combat Instructor has made me realize the limitations of my body. However, I have come to realize that the physical limitations are merely mental roadblocks and the pain and discomfort only serve to make me stronger. Perhaps that is the most rewarding aspect of being a Combat Instructor. Every day I am provided the platform to empower young women by setting the example, demonstrating that difficulty can be overcome and instill in them some of the traits passed from my mother.

Army - Staff Sergeant (SSgt) Nohemi Custer



Staff Sgt. Nohemi Custer, a native of Juarez, Mexico, is an Unmanned Aerial Systems operator, assigned to the 3rd Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Armored Division. Staff Sgt. Custer's father, moved the family to the U.S. from Mexico when she was six years old, on a work-to-citizenship program. She graduated from Gadsden High School in Anthony, New Mexico with a scholarship to attend New Mexico State University. Custer graduated with a bachelor's degree in both accounting and finance, as well as a Masters of Arts degree in economics. While working as an accountant, Custer met her husband who was an enlisted Soldier in the Army. After hearing patriotic music frequently played at her husband's military ceremonies, she realized how grateful and thankful she was to be an American citizen. Custer decided to join the Army as an enlisted Soldier, desiring to become a noncommissioned officer. Custer's leadership capabilities earned her the position of Platoon Sergeant while she was still a sergeant, and the promotion to staff sergeant in only four years.

Army - Specialist (SPC) Samantha McCurley



Spc. Samantha McCurley was born in Huntsville, Alabama and spent her childhood in Centennial, Colorado. Her single mother raised her and her younger sister while battling Stage 4 colon cancer from the time she was 16-years old. She always wanted to serve her country and challenge herself both physically and mentally. She made the decision to join the military to make her family proud. Samantha joined the Army as a 68W, combat medic, and was assigned to the 3-16th Field Artillery, 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas. She is the epitome of the physical fitness standard in her battalion, scoring highest on the Army Physical Fitness. Spc. McCurley is the senior medic for Alpha Battery, mentoring and training junior medics to improve their tactical and clinical medical care. She plans on continuing service to her nation as a Physician Assistant (PA).

Army - Captain Nargis Kabiri



Cpt. Nargis Kabiri is a first-generation American whose family emigrated from Afghanistan. Her family moved to New York and eventually settled in a small town in Minnesota. She is the youngest of six siblings, her father passed away when she was six, and her mother did not speak English. After the 9/11 events ensued, her goal was to bring understanding to each Nation, bridging the gap by breaking down cultural and language barriers. She decided the military was the best route to do so, and enlisted in the Minnesota National Guard in 2003. In 2005, she was accepted to attend the United States Military Academy on a basketball scholarship where she graduated with a BA in Arabic and Systems Engineering. Upon graduation, in May 2010 she was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Field Artillery. Kabiri attended Field Artillery Officers Basic Course at Fort Sill, Oklahoma followed by an assignment to Fort Bragg, North Carolina where she deployed immediately to Kandahar, Afghanistan with the 82nd Airborne Division as the Commanding General's Cultural Advisor. Following this assignment, she served in 1st Battalion, 321st Airborne Field Artillery Regiment (AFAR) as the first female cannon platoon leader to the world's only Airborne M777 Battalion. CPT Kabiri is the first female Battery Commander in the 3rd Infantry Division, and one of the first female firing Battery Commanders in the Field Artillery Branch, commanding both the M119A3 and M109A6 Howitzer systems in Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division Artillery. CPT Kabiri has great passion for Artillery and the Army. She enjoys operating as a Combat Arms officer as well as mentoring young Soldiers. She is married and the mother of two boys ages 2 and 14 months.

Army - Specialist (SPC) Lindsay Hays



Spc. Lindsey Lee Hays, 91A, M1 Abrams Tank System Maintainer, Golf Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment joined the Army in 2013, making her 4th generation military. She is from San Antonio, Texas, but calls Phoenix, Arizona home. She initially enlisted for the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and later reclassified to become a tank mechanic. At 90lbs, she's still a force to be reckoned with. Her father is a mechanic and she reminisces about working together during her childhood so she wanted to show her father she could become a mechanic in the Army. This summer, SPC Hays and her husband will change jobs and continue service to the nation as an Air Defense Battle Management Operator.

Army - Specialist (SPC) Sauntia Pomele



Spc. Sautia Pomele, is from the U.S Territory of American Samoa, an island located in the South Pacific. She enlisted in the Army in June 2016 after learning of her father's terminal illness. She felt that military service would enable her to continue her father's legacy of selfless service to others.

She is currently serving as a Petroleum Specialist with for the 543rd Composite Supply Company, 548th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade at Fort Drum, NY, where she is responsible for the management, distribution, and accountability of petroleum products, as well as maintaining equipment serviceability to ensure continuous support is provided for the enhancement of the mission and the battalion's overall readiness.

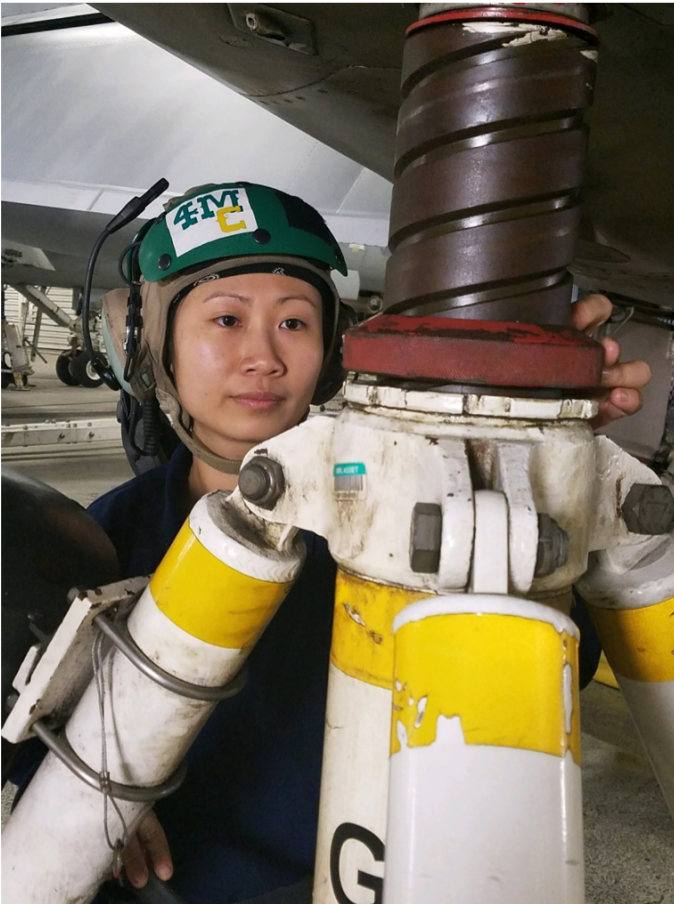
She is a mother to two teenage boys and her husband also serves in the Army Reserves. Despite the many challenges she faces daily, she is content and humbled by the experience of service to her family, country, and the American people.

Navy - Lieutenant (Lt.) Samantha Telles-Goins



Lieutenant Samantha G. Telles-Goins, from El Paso, TX, is a MH-60S pilot in the United States Navy currently stationed with HSC-25 at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. Her mother, Mary Telles-Goins, was a Planner for the Texas Department of Transportation (Ret.) and her father, LtCol Richard Telles-Goins, is a retired Army and Air Force Helicopter Pilot. Now both are Small Business Owner/Operators. LT Telles-Goins said the following about her reasons for joining the Navy: "I joined the military because I wanted to be part of an organization that would afford me interesting and limitless opportunities and recognize my accomplishments on their merit alone. Serving my country in the U.S. Navy has allowed me to join a network of passionate professionals that are eager to provide avenues for outreach and change, in the military, civilian communities, and across the globe."

Navy - Aviation Structural Mechanic Third Class (AM3) Yongsi Tan



I am Aviation Structural Mechanic Third Class (Aviation Warfare) Yongsi Tan, United States Navy. I was born in Guangzhou, China but I call Mineral Wells, Texas home. I am currently stationed with Strike Fighter Squadron ONE ZERO FIVE (VFA-105) at NAS Oceana, Virginia. The main reason I joined the United States Navy is because of my husband. His honorable Naval service of 11 years and sea stories have always been intriguing and interesting and I wanted to experience it myself to get a better understanding of that part of his life. As an Aviation Structural Mechanic, we focus on the maintenance and upkeep of the hydraulic system, landing gear, and flight control surfaces. It has been quite an adventure. I joined VFA-105 during their 2016 deployment onboard USS DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER (CVN-69). I was in awe from my first step onto the flight deck, where I witnessed the orchestrated chaos of launching and recovering aircraft. The first time I touched our aircraft, I could not believe that I got a chance to work on an F/A-18E. Working as an F/A-18E Plain Captain, the Commanding Officer entrusted me with the huge responsibility and safety of our pilots, maintainers, and aircraft, culminating with the great honor of being selected as the 2017 VFA-105 Plane Captain of the Year. With only two years of service, I can say with confidence that it was a great decision to have joined the Navy. I am forever grateful for all the opportunities given by the Gunslinger team as well as the continued support provided. The sailor I am today is a direct result of the enormous amount of help and mentorship received from my fellow Sailors and all of the selfless support given from my husband.

Navy - Lieutenant (Lt.) Anna R. Mansueti



Lt. Anna Mansueti, of Easton, Maryland, made it her goal to be a Naval Officer at the age of five. She found the inspiration from her father John Mansueti, who served a long and distinguished career in the U.S. Navy in three separate and distinct communities. During his 27 years in the service, he served as a Navy F-14 fighter pilot, flight surgeon and radiation oncologist. Anna earned her commission through the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps program at the University of Colorado, Boulder, and ultimately earned a coveted spot in the Navy's explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) community, which is a predominantly male profession. As a qualified diving officer, military freefall parachutist and demolition expert, Anna commanded a platoon deployed aboard the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) on an eight month deployment in the South China Sea. She currently leads and prepares three forward-deployed EOD Mobile Unit (EODMU) 8 platoons for contingency operations and high visibility engagements within the U.S. Africa Command and U.S. European Command areas of operations. Anna is committed to leading in the high-demand EOD force, passionate about the career development of her peers and Sailors, and consistently leads by example.

Navy - Aviation Structural Mechanic Second Class (AM2) Melinda J. Dauby



Growing up in Tremonton Utah, a small town where there are more livestock than people, I never in a million years would have thought that me, a 5ft 3inch, 110 pound female, would have such a tremendous impact on today's military. I am an Aviation Structural Mechanic (AM) Second Class Petty Officer in the United States Navy. Joining the military was something I've always wanted to do, so the decision for me wasn't hard. I have always had a desire to be a part of something bigger and more important than myself. Serving my country has fulfilled my dreams in so many ways. Deploying with my fellow Scorpions to Incirlik, Air Base Turkey and assisting in the launch and recovery of six EA-18G aircraft in support of Operation INHERENT RESOLE was one of those dreams. I am currently a recipient of two Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, and have been promoted both meritoriously and through my own personal achievement to Petty Officer Second Class, all within 2 years of joining. I am a strong, self-driven, independent leader, who loves her job and country. I could not be more grateful for the opportunities the Navy has afforded me, the invaluable life lessons it has instilled in me and the positive influence it has had on mine and my family's life.

Navy - Intelligence Specialist First Class (IS1) Dynesha Scantling



IS1 Dynesha L. Scantling grew up in her hometown of Saint Helena Island, S.C. before enlisting in the United States Navy. She currently serves as the Leading Chief Petty Officer for her division. Her exceptional leadership through 3 phases of the Fleet Response Training Plan has led to a 97% pass rate for the Intelligence Warfare area certification. She leads a team of 11 Sailors through intelligence production and training as well as day-to-day maintenance for 14 spaces. She also serves as the Safety and Career Counselor for her department, ensuring Sailors are well educated in career decisions inside and outside the Navy. IS1 Scantling comes from a proud family of Navy Sailors that made serving an obvious choice after graduating high school. Listening to stories about her grandfather, hearing experiences from her cousins, and friends, her desire to serve became even stronger.

Air Force - Master Sergeant (MSgt) Shana Echevarria



Master Sergeant Shana Echevarria is the Manager of the Air Force Chief of Chaplains office for Personnel and Budget. Born in Lima Peru, 13 year old Shana immigrated with her mother and younger brother to the US and settled in Alexandria, VA. Being grateful for the opportunities and education this amazing nation offered her, this stellar young woman was proud to give back by enlisting in the United States Air Force. By way of special provisions in the Immigration and Nationality Act, expediting the naturalization process for service members, Sergeant Echevarria became a US Citizen while serving in the Air Force. Sergeant Echevarria selflessly wanted to serve God and Country and has always answered the nation's call. Having deployed four times as an Air Force Chaplain Assistant, MSgt Echevarria has carried first amendment guaranteed religious freedoms to service members at seven forward operating bases in Iraq, three coalition countries, and a humanitarian deployment in her birth country of Peru. Additionally, Sergeant Echevarria served two years at Dover Air Force Base. There, she honored America's fallen at the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operation where all remains of our heroes are welcomed back to American soil. In Dover, Sergeant Echevarria comforted 235 grieving families of warriors who paid the ultimate price for her freedom. Furthermore, Sergeant Echevarria is highly sought as an expert in her field and is constantly writing Air Force level policy and educating Chaplain Corps leaders. Her polished delivery of instruction exudes so much confidence, listeners would never know that English is her second language. Finally, Sergeant Echevarria champions the Chaplain Corps' Diversity and Inclusion initiative that strives to provide religious freedoms for the diverse population of American Airmen and their families. In her personal life, Sergeant Echevarria capitalizes on her diverse background by serving as a translator for Spanish speaking missionaries who provide reports to the churches that sponsor them. In every facet of life, Master Sergeant Shana Echevarria embodies the best of what America and the Air Force have to offer.

Air Force - Captain (Capt) Clancy Morrical



Originally from The Woodlands, Texas, Capt Clancy Morrical is an Instructor Pilot and Weapons Officer, Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany. Captain Morrical joined the Air Force in 2010 and attended training on F-16 Fighting Falcons at Luke Air Force in Arizona. Morrical finished initial F-16 training as a distinguished graduate, and has served operationally at Osan Air Base, South Korea and Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany. In 2016 she deployed with the 480th Fighter Squadron in support of Operation INHERENT RESOLVE, flying 57 combat missions and employing 66 weapons in combat. Most recently, she became the first female graduate in the 35 year history of the USAF's prestigious F-16 Weapons Instructor Course, U.S. Air Force Weapons School (USAFWS). Morrical's decision to attend the USAFWS was grounded in her passion for education and her parents' military service with the U.S. Army. Military service is a staple in Capt Morrical's family, as her father served in the Vietnam War as a helicopter pilot, her mother is a retired physical therapist with the U.S. Army, and her grandmother was in the U.S. Navy during World War II.

Air Force - Master Sergeant (MSgt) Lillian Rogers



Master Sergeant Lillian Rogers is assigned to the Explosive Ordnance Disposal flight at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, AZ. Originally from Puwallup, Washington, Rogers is a 20-year Air Force veteran who re-enlisted in 2017 to serve another three years. During her career, she's been stationed at 5 bases across the country, as well as Aviano, Italy. Married to Chris, a law enforcement bomb technician supervisor with Pima County Sheriff's department, the couple welcomed a son, Boomer, into the world in August. They also have a 7-year-old son whom Rogers adopted from Morocco as a baby. She has deployed seven times - three in direct combat, including once to Iraq and twice to Afghanistan. EOD team leader for Counter Improvised Explosive Device missions is a job she says taught her resilience and the importance of training and leadership. Rogers received the Bronze Star on her 2012 deployment to Ghazni, Afghanistan, where her team worked side-by-side with Polish Special Forces. She has also received the Meritorious Service Medal, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Army and Air Force Commendation Medals, a Navy and Air Force Achievement Medals. She was a spokesperson for Women's History Month and a Distinguished Graduate at Professional Military Education School. Throughout her career, she's been selected for numerous Airman, Non-commissioned Officer and Senior NCO awards.

Air Force - Tech Sergeant (TSgt) Brooke Williams



Technical Sergeant Brooke Williams is a multi-talented Security Forces Defender with potential that knows no bounds. She hails from Westminster, South Carolina, but the origins of her hard work, discipline and dedication are in the foundation of morals and beliefs instilled by her mother. She grew up playing “Army” and was inspired to join the service by the examples of her uncles who served in the Army and Navy. Following the untimely passing of her mother, when she was just 18 years old, Sergeant Williams knew the best decision and way to move forward was to serve her country and join the Air Force family. Immediately after high school she started her journey in the United States Air Force. Sergeant Williams is the first to accomplish many great feats and break barriers as a female in her career field. She earned her jump wings while stationed at her first duty station and was the only female in the squadron to fill a jump billet. During that assignment, she deployed to Camp Bucca, Iraq, and conducted over 80 combat patrols, aggressively patrolling 178 square kilometers, accumulating 640 hours of outside the wire missions. Improvised explosive devices struck two of her combat patrols in two days. Because of her actions and those of her teammates, many lives were saved. The U.S. Army awarded her an Army Commendation medal for her bravery during that deployment. She has completed another combat deployment in Iraq, culminating in 205 combat missions and has since deployed two more times. At her next duty station, because she wanted to have a hand in bringing war fighters back home to their families, she volunteered to become an Air Mobility Command Phoenix Raven, a specially trained Security Forces member who defends U.S. aircraft, personnel and resources after landing at unsecure locations. After becoming a Raven, she became the first female Phoenix Raven Program Manager for the 60th Security Forces Squadron at Travis AFB, California where her leadership led to her selection as the 2017 AMC Security Forces Raven Team Leader of the year. Sergeant Williams is currently a Force Protection Team Chief in charge of 23 Security Forces Airmen with the 821st Contingency Response Squadron. While assigned to the 821st, she volunteered to train as a Counter Sniper and is one of fewer than 20 women to have successfully completed the course over the last 16 years. Her training closed a four year shortfall for her unit’s mission capability, and she is now a part of an elite team that provides force protection to contingency operations around the globe. Her leadership and positive impact to the unit was key to the 821st CRS being the AMC nomination for the 2017 Air Force Association Citation of Honor.

Air Force - Captain (Capt) Joanna Zemek



Captain Joanna “JZ” Zemek, an Intelligence Officer assigned to the 724th Special Tactics Group, is part of a family tradition of service dating back to her Grandfather, who served in the perilous occupation of coal shoveling for steam powered naval vessels during World War II. Her parents, John and Eunice Zemek, were American teachers in Kuwait City, Kuwait when Joanna was born in 1985. On 2 August 1990, Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait, exposing the family to major combat operations in Kuwait City to include artillery, mechanized, and infantry combat. Only 5 years old, Joanna and her family fled the overrun city with nothing more than what they could carry, eventually starting over in Oman. In 1996, Joanna relocated with her parents and older brother Ben to New Mexico where her desire to honor the family tradition led her to the New Mexico State University ROTC program. In the nine years since her commission as an Air Force Intelligence Officer, she deployed 12 times across South America, Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, to include combat zones and counter-narcotics missions. Fluent in Spanish and French, her linguistic prowess, physical acumen, and leadership led her to service in not one but two selectively manned organizations; the Air Force’s sole Foreign Internal Defense Squadron and the Air Force’s premier ground Special Operations unit. As a Combat Aviation Advisor she was selected as the Quick Reaction Force Commander, as well as French translator, during Foreign Internal Defense operations in Western Africa. Additionally, Joanna participated in the SECDEF directed Women in Service Review, championing the integration of females into combat positions within the Air Force. She served downrange as a Combat Aviation Advisor, Targeting Officer and as the Senior Intelligence Officer/J2 for a Special Operations Joint Task Force in Africa where her technical expertise and intensity were critical in locating, targeting, and gaining the Presidential authority required to destroy an ISIS stronghold. A poised leader, she interfaces regularly with 3- and 4- star Generals, most recently briefing the HAF/A3 and AFRICOM Commander. As a child, America was Captain Joanna Zemek’s dream, now she considers her service as an opportunity to secure that dream for others.

Coast Guard - Lieutenant Junior Grade (Ltjg) Carol Eastman



Lieutenant Junior Grade Carol Eastman, U.S. Coast Guard, is the Deck Department Head onboard USCGC MOHAWK, a medium endurance cutter homeported in Key West, FL. A native of East Granby, CT, LTJG Eastman leads 18 personnel in some of the U.S. Coast Guard's most dynamic and challenging areas of responsibility. During her tour onboard MOHAWK, LTJG Eastman directly participated in the interdiction of 26 drug laden vessels, seizing over 21,000kgs of cocaine with an estimated value of nearly \$700 million. Her efforts directly support the U.S. Coast Guard's Western Hemisphere strategy at combating Transnational Criminal Organizations and the destabilizing effects of illegal narcotics on Central and South American countries. A 2016 graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, LTJG Eastman chose to serve to experience different cultures and see the world.

Coast Guard - Lieutenant (Lt.) Zehringer



Lieutenant Meghan Zehringer, a native of Colorado Springs, Colorado, grew up in a city which fostered familiarity with the Armed Forces. Because of a strong history of military service in her family, her deep sense of commitment and duty to serve, and the multitude of opportunities available, Lieutenant Zehringer decided to apply to the United States Coast Guard Academy. During her time at the Academy, her exceptional performance led to appointment as the Regimental Commander during her senior year, the most elite leadership position for cadets and held by only a few women before her. Upon graduation, Lieutenant Zehringer served aboard the USCGC WAESCHE (WMSL-751) as a deck watch officer where she led a crew of over 120 in execution of nearly all eleven humanitarian and national defense missions. She later served at Marine Safety Unit Portland, Oregon, as a marine inspector where she inspected commercial vessels for regulatory compliance, which prepared her to serve in her current capacity at Marine Safety Unit Duluth, Minnesota, as the Vessel Inspections Division Chief. Great Lakes cargo vessels operating in the Port of Duluth-Superior and Lake Superior move an average of 35 million short tons of cargo, resulting in \$2 Billion in shipping revenue annually. Lieutenant Zehringer leads a team of marine safety professionals dedicated to ensuring the safe and efficient utilization of the marine transportation system. She is the first woman to hold this leadership position at Marine Safety Unit Duluth.

Coast Guard - Operations Specialist Third Class (OS3) Danielle Vogelsang



Danielle Vogelsang, a native of Panama City Beach, Florida, is an Operations Specialist Third Class serving aboard U.S. Coast Guard Cutter SENECA homeported in Boston, Massachusetts. Petty Officer Vogelsang works in the Combat Information Center aboard SENECA, which is a hub of activity while the SENECA is deployed from the North Atlantic conducting search and rescue operations to the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific where the cutter is on the front lines of counter-narcotics operations and migrant interdictions. Petty Officer Vogelsang is instrumental during these operations from using the radar to locating vessels potentially engaged in illicit trafficking to communicating with vessels in distress during search and rescue operations. While Petty Officer Vogelsang hasn't been in the Coast Guard very long, she loves being a part of an important part of the nation's smallest service, "One of my favorite parts about being onboard Cutter SENECA is the ability to work with so many members of varying rates and backgrounds it gives me a better perspective on life and the Coast Guard as a whole. Every single person on the cutter has a purpose and important job onboard, whether you're the Captain or the newly reported non-rated enlisted service member, everyone is critical in fulfilling our mission while at sea and back home, in port." Petty Officer Vogelsang comes from a military family and is proud of continuing her family's military traditions stating, "Both of my parents are retired military, so for my entire life I've grown up seeing all the benefits the military has to offer, from the healthcare, educational benefits, how well the military works with families and the brotherhood that goes along with being active duty or a veteran. Serving my country is one of the greatest achievements I have done to date and I look forward to what the future holds!"

Coast Guard - Aviation Electronics Technician (AET2) Kassandra Hunter



A native of Anaheim, California, Aviation Electronics Technician Second Class Kassandra Hunter enlisted in the US Coast Guard in 2007 to pursue her desires to fulfill a positive role in her community, and provide a service to her country. Petty Officer Hunter has operated as a search and rescue flight mechanic and avionics electrical technician for ten years. Proving herself as an adept technician and aircrew member, she excels both in and out of the aircraft. Notably, she hoisted the survivors of a sailing vessel capsized by a rogue wave during a yacht race, located and performed a remote seaside cliff rescue of a woman found barely alive after days of searching, and assisted in the successful rescue of a child trapped for forty-five minutes in an overturned vessel which was repeatedly being thrown against a rock wall by heavy surf. Those rescues, and several others, have been featured in news reports across the nation, bringing significant credit and exposure to the Coast Guard's missions. Her courageous actions in flight have earned her the Coast Guard Achievement Medal, and multiple Commandant's Letters of Commendation. In addition to her military service, she and her husband, who is also an active duty Coast Guard member, volunteer in environmental stewardship efforts to clean dunes and beaches of garbage and hazards to recreation. She has recently been chosen by her unit to step into the role of a search and rescue flight mechanic instructor, and is selected to advance to Petty Officer First Class in the very near future. Her efforts and dedication to service are of the highest order, and the United States Coast Guard is extremely fortunate to have members such as herself within its ranks.

Coast Guard - Boatswain's Mate Second Class (BM2) Rachel LaFevre



Originally from Astoria, Oregon and currently stationed at U.S Coast Guard Station Coos Bay located on the Southern Oregon coast, Boatswain's Mate Second Class Rachel LaFevre is one of the units certified Heavy Weather Motor Lifeboat Coxswains where she demonstrates exceptional proficiency in craft in a very demanding and challenging Pacific Northwest operating environment. Petty Officer LaFevre has been on active duty for just over 9 years and her desire to serve her country comes from a family rich with military service. Her father retired as a Lieutenant Commander from the U.S. Coast Guard after a highly successful 30-year career and her older brother is currently serving on active duty with the U.S Marine Corps as a Warrant Officer. Petty Officer LaFevre's aspiration to serve is driven by her desire to be hands-on and operational whether in security operations or being a first responder to those in need; she sets the example for others embodying the U.S Coast Guard's Core Values of "Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty".