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Making a choice to join the military

Kelcey Jackson Staff Reporter

Joining the military is nearly always a life-defining decision. Students who have decided to go into the military have many job choices as there are over 150 different job options to choose from when joining. When it comes to those who are willing to serve the country, not many people think about how they feel.

It may only be known why they are joining, like free college or the chance to experience something new. When a person decides to join, they immediately gain the benefits of free college, fully covered medical care, and option for full-time or part time service

"I realized that college was not for me and I always wanted to a part of the world instead of just sitting around doing nothing. I am doing thirteen weeks of Marine boot camp and then getting deployed to Paris Island, South Carolina in June or early July to become a motor transport," senior Jayden Bishop said.

Motor transports are primarily responsible for supervising or operating wheel vehicles to transport personnel and cargo. They are the backbone of the military's support and sustainment structure, providing mobility on and off the battlefield.

In early March, military recruiter Jeremy Earnshaw came to RHS during lunches to educate those who were interested in joining the armed forces and to answer any questions or any concerns that a student may have.

"Even though recruiters do not necessarily look for a specific person, they are given a brief description of what attributes the person should have and be able to pass a medical background check," Earnshaw said. The opportunity to learn responsibility, focus, and discipline from military service can

benefit enlistees for life. People who go into the military are taught how to make decisions on the spot and learn to be able function in periods of stress. However, it is important to have a thorough understanding of the risks as well as the benefits of military service along with what the commitment to a career in the armed forces involves.

A service member's length of com-

mitment largely depends on the service branch, career choice, and required training. Although most first-term enlistments are four years of active duty followed by four years in the Individual Ready Reserve (I.R.R.), a soldier's active duty is not a 24-hour job; service members have

off-work hours, similar to people in civilian jobs. However, the I.R.R. could be described as an "on-call" job because recruits do not just train, and they can live at home with their families while maintaining a civilian job, but may be called to duty if necessary or until their term expires.

There are also many opportunities to travel the world in the military. According to military.com, "Your first step after Basic Training will most likely be 'A' School or Advanced Individual Training (A.I.T.), followed by travel to your first duty assign-

ment." While there is no guarantee of placement, recruits can volunteer for overseas duty if they want to see more of the world. The military has bases in Hawaii, Japan, Germany, England, Italy, Spain, and many other locations. And no matter where they are based, depending on their current assignment, service members have opportunities to travel the world through deployment and recreation.



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Soldiers entering the military should prepare for a long road ahead of them, but pride and honor serving one's country brings about makes all of the hardships worth it.

Even if those who have joined are part of the military that does not mean that they had given up a social life. In fact, it is quite the opposite. From recreational facilities on base and special entertainment to sports leagues and discounted leisure travel, military personnel often maintain

the military also has its own sports league called the Armed Forces Sports. The program includes 25 different sports categories open to all active-duty personnel and features nine national championships and 16 international championships.

"The military also offers discounted vacation opportunities to service members and their families. Each service branch has a Morale, Welfare and Recreation (M.W.R.) department dedicated to helping personnel with travel, recreation and social activities," according to military.com.

Here at RHS we have multiple seniors that have fully committed themselves to the military. Aleksandr Blain, one of the seniors has wanted to join the military since he was 4 years old. His grandfather and him would always talk about everything relating to the military.

"He really inspired my decision," Blain said. Leaving July 8 from MEPS (Military Entrance Processing Station) in Troy, Blain will be heading to Fort Benning, Georgia where he will remain there for about a year. He will be training to be an Airborne Ranger. Airborne Rangers have specialized missions that are shorter than the normal deployment. The missions could range from taking down a possible or known terrorist to going to a foreign country to teach children.

"I am taking classes for land navigation, map reading, and first aid in combat," Blain said.

The opportunity to learn responsibility, focus, and discipline from military service can benefit enlistees for life. The Panther Prowl would like to thank all of those students and active members in the armed forces for all the hard work they do and for what they contribute to the country.