



# MY TIME SERVING IN THE MILITARY (JROTC)

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By Daleth Rodriguez



# CONTEXT:

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For the past four years, I could be found wearing my rotc uniform, every Wednesday. Rotc has given me unique opportunities and experiences you can't find anywhere else. I simply would not be who I am today without JROTC.



# PRE ROTC DALETH

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- In Elementary I was always a quiet kid, I would get bullied about a weird accent I had and not stand up for myself. My first grade teacher said if she could clone me she would because I was just so smart and quiet. I guess I behaved well but really I was quite lonely. I was always so afraid to speak because I did not want people to hear what I sounded like. The kind where you don't record videos because you'll hear it. I was smart at least. By second grade, I was pulled out of class to tutor my peers, which was quite weird like hello I am 8?
- By Middle I was just an insecure little ball. Desperate for friends, but still shy about my voice, and when you through a girl who went through puberty early, you get a mess. I was still always behaving well, tell my crushes I couldn't date them because I wasn't allowed to date, never swearing. 6th grade was when I met people who I would later find out to be my closest friends. From then I just stressed about my grades because I knew that's where college prep started.





# NEW TO ROTC

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When I first started, I already knew I wanted to try to accomplish everything you can do in rotc. I wanted to earn every ribbon, every badge, reach the highest rank and become wing commander. I was kind of scared because I could see the competition was tough, and I was going to have to try to stand out to the instructors to get it. It was also weird trying to navigate high school, or a social life when you are wearing a uniform. These goals I set were good because they motivated me to keep going. I joined rotc with my friend Alana, it was good to have a familiar face with it.



# DRILL TEAM

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- I joined my lady eagles drill team freshmen year. That is the stomp and clamps you might see me do in the hallway after school. Or maybe you've seen us at pep rally. Before covid we were going to nationals because they had won in 2019. That didn't happen. My junior year the team started back up again and I was co captain. We didn't go to nationals because we were just trying to bring the program to life again. But this year, I was captain and we won 8th place at nationals. The team taught me how to lead, be patient and understanding, and that there's more than one way to approach something. It also revealed me a lot about the weed epidemic because of it being an issue on my team.



# LEADERSHIP

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- ROTC'S motto is WE BUILD LEADERS. They really do focus on that. When we are marching there is a commander who tells them what do like LEFT FACE or LEFT LEFT LEFT RIGHT LEFT. I have been commanding since freshmen year. I have won first place commander three times. Being a leader made me step out my shell and care less about my voice, because now I was focusing on my voice sounding like a commander, and now if I was pronouncing things right. A leader also means people are looking up to you, so I always made sure to model good citizenship and proper conduct with unifrom wear, etc.



# WING COMMANDER

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- In rotc we have a thing called top 7 which is our leadership staff positions. These are the posters you see in the hallway by the library. To be on top 7 you have to have a resume and apply for it like a job, wear your uniform and do an interview. I was mission support my junior year, and top 7 doesn't happen until senior year officers. It felt good my hard work was being recognized amongst my competition. They announced top every semester. And I wanted to be commander, they announced it last year at rotc grad night and I got it. With being wing commander with Latasia is so fun, it is also stressed as my job specifically is dealing with disciplinary actions for skipping, pda in uniform or smoking. I do CEB which is rotc court and how we handle disciplinary actions

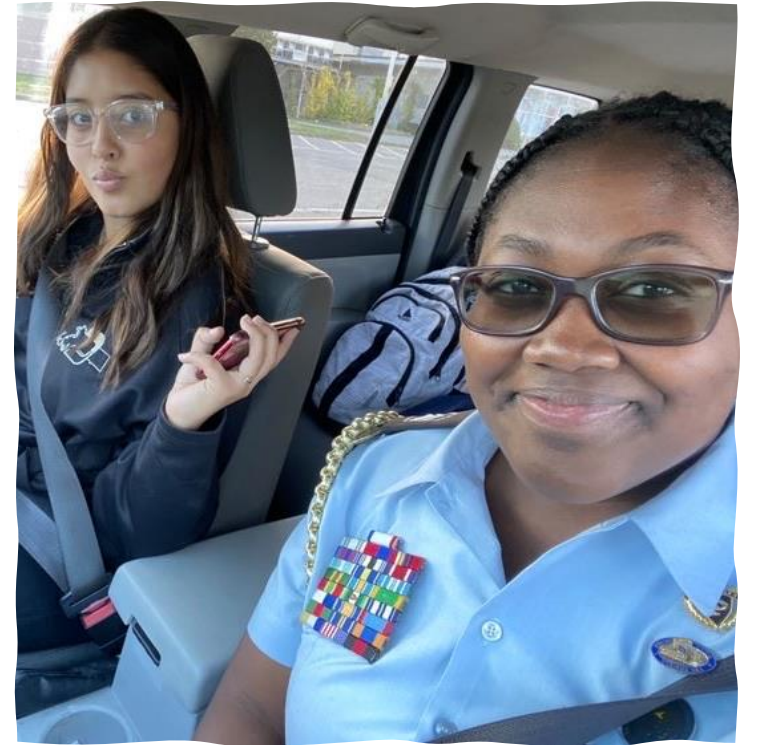




# FRIENDSHIPS

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- The friendships I have made in rotc are ones that made light of stressful situations. Whenever rotc got tough, my friends kept me wanting to stay. The freshmen I have led and impacted make me feel proud of my job and I know I left a legacy. From field trips to making plans outside of rotc to hangout, I always had a good laugh with other cadets. They are people who all wanted the same thing in high school.





# WHY?

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- I joined rotc to gain confidence and leadership because I was shy. I definitely got that in my 4 years in rotc. 7th grade me would think about high school and not be thinking about rotc. I genuinely thought I would play sports forever, not be stomping and clapping. I wouldn't change it for the world. I have learned so much. I am a very disciplined person. With my nails, no piercings regular hair color. ROTC isn't for everyone but it was for me. I am grateful for the experience and it is why I am who I am. I think of things in an aspect of knowing someone is always looking. I try to always exemplify the rotc core values of Integrity first, Service before self, and Excellence in all we do. ROTC can be challenging but it is rewarding. Study the cadet guide, take advantage of everything ROTC has to offer





# LIL OUTSIDE SOURCE TIME

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- "STUDIES THAT EXAMINED ACADEMIC OUTCOMES FOUND CONSISTENTLY POSITIVE ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA) AND JROTC PARTICIPATION. JROTC PARTICIPATION WAS ALSO CONSISTENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH LOWER DROPOUT RATES AND IMPROVED ATTENDANCE."

source <https://www.usnews.com/education/blogs/high-school-notes/2014/11/10/3-things-to-know-about-high-school-jrotc-programs>

- Your time is limited, so make the most of your time.



# COLLEGE

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- In rotc, 92% of us are going to college. The other 8% are enlisting in the military. Rotc doesn't mean military, they just want you to reach your full potential. Leaving rotc, knowing there was nothing left for me to accomplish is a good feeling. Rotc helps me since I want to get into law, we talked about civics and government in class. The military conduct will help me engaged with law professionals. Not everyone stays in rotc for 4 years, but the ones that do, never regret it. Now I am going to providence College, and as my high school career comes to an end, I leave with gratitude to my instructors and friends that helped me along the way. I have been made fun of for being in rotc but i dont really care. I have been told that rotc is a scam and a waste. If rotc is a scam, then let it scam me. 10/10 experience, would recommend.

