



How has being a JROTC cadet shaped what community means to you, and how have cadet principles been applied & expressed in your daily life?

Hannah Hunt, *Basha High School*

My name is Hannah Hunt, and I am currently a sophomore at Perry High School in Chandler, Arizona for the 2023-2024 school year and a member of the Basha JROTC program. As a sophomore, I continue to embrace the high school experience and am actively involved in numerous philanthropic clubs as well as sports programs. In addition, I am enrolled in AP and Honors courses again this school year, while balancing my time with community service projects and church.

Being a JROTC cadet, principles are being applied and expressed daily. I continually seek self-improvement and work toward excellence in all aspects of my professional school career as well as personally. At Perry, I joined the swim team competing primarily in butterfly, freestyle and team medley relays, lettering both my freshman and sophomore year for the team. The school swim season was from July-December; school practices were 5 days a week, and I had excellent attendance which allowed me to swim at all away meets. To maintain the swimming momentum, I also participate in 'club' swim for RIO three days a week during the off-season. At school, I am also on the track team and participate in the long-distance events (800m, 1600m). This year I joined the wrestling team too, joining a group of 12 other female wrestlers for the school.

This is my second year being involved in Basha's JROTC, Air Force program, and I enjoy it very much. I have been promoted five times and am currently a Cadet Master Sergeant.

As a Puma Squadron cadet, I have been invited to several off-campus events designed to elevate my role in JROTC, provide additional experiences and training, and learn new skills. These invitations are by application only and I have been fortunate to be selected to participate in leadership programs hosted by the FBI – ALEAD (Arizona Leadership Education & Development Academy) which was a week-long leadership & community service camp hosted by current members of the FBI and various police force members throughout Arizona. Additionally, I attended a one-day DEA task force clinic as well as a week-long ASPIRE Police and Fire Department Training camp. Not only did these opportunities expose me to various public service agencies but they showed me the characteristics and qualities of true community leaders. These leaders gave of themselves and their experiences, challenges, fears, and victories – but especially their time to invest in me and other attendees. It gives a true example of the importance and value they place on 'paying it forward' and exemplifies their core value of service to the community being a primary goal. It is in part due to recognizing their efforts that I recognize the value of investing in others and a reason I enjoy being a youth leader at my church.

I live the mantra of Service before Self. I am actively involved in community service and have dedicated nearly 300 hours during my freshman and sophomore to JROTC and other programs, such as Feed My Starving Children, Christmas fundraising for Seniors, Letters for Rosie, Club Leo, Operation Smile,

and many, many others. As mentioned, I also serve as a youth leader at my church and am actively involved at the nursery on Sundays when I'm not helping with the kid's church. This school year, I have volunteered nearly 80 hours at my church. JROTC has shown me how important it is to give to the community....it does make a difference!

I am extremely fortunate to be influenced by my Aerospace Science Instructor, MSgt Keith Johnson, who leads by example by participating in and attending all of the squadron's community service events. He has attended graduations for my fellow cadets and myself from the supplemental camps and clinics previously mentioned – attesting to the value he places on investing in us. I respect his involvement and have personally pledged to be that type of person and leader myself.

I am willing to put in the hard work and the time to make the most success from the JROTC experience recognizing the benefits to personal self-improvement the program and experiences provide. During my freshman year I was up at 4:15 am daily to get ready for school, traveled nearly 30 minutes to get to school (thanks to an out-of-boundary exemption), to be ready for the school bus at 6 a.m. for JROTC. I believe this is one example of my dedication to myself, to my high school career as well as my commitment as a member of the JROTC.

The JROTC program objectives align with my life-objectives; I enjoy fitness, love to support, and be actively involved, in my community. I am also a person that likes to lend a hand to team members – whether through encouragement or a literal helping hand, following the principle of 'no man left behind'. I recognize we all have different talents and strengths, fears,

and weaknesses. I approach these differences with enthusiasm and not hesitation. I truly appreciate diversity –how boring would life be if we are all the same? I also believe that these differences teach us something about ourselves...causing us to evaluate our ability to approach people or experiences with an open mind.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views on what being a JROTC member means to me. The benefits from my participation will go beyond the 4 years of high school, creating what I believe is a more aware, diverse, and thoughtful leader in my community regardless of if I pursue a military career, a career in law enforcement or public service, or as a member of the community in general. I believe if everyone followed cadet principles, we would all be the best version of ourselves.

Hannah Hunt

Basha High School

2024 BBB Ethical Cadet Scholarship Recipient



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