Meet Future U.S. Army Soldier

Maylisa Lyn Hodges

Hodges is a senior in the Connections Homeschool Program and will pursue a career in Army intelligence upon graduation.



I was five years old, living in an orphanage in Haiti, when a 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck Port-au-Prince and changed my life forever.

I was too young to recall the totality of the destruction around me, but the few memories I have are crisp and vivid. One that stands out especially is of U.S. Army Soldiers in uniform providing humanitarian aid and medical treatment to anyone who was injured. Soon, I was on a cargo plane to America, accompanied by other displaced orphans. I was flown to Florida and told that my new family, a couple from Soldotna, Alaska, was on the way to pick me up.

It was February when I landed in Alaska – and it was cold. This type of weather was entirely unfamiliar, but I was in awe of the beautiful mountains and scenery in my new home. Seeing snow for the first time was like a dream, and snowy adventures marked how I bonded with my adopted siblings.

But one major issue persisted; I did not speak English. On my first day of school, surrounded by people who I could not understand, I was greeted with a cake that had “Welcome to Alaska” written on it. I remember feeling warm, happy, and accepted. Within five months, I had not only learned to speak English, but I had caught up to my peers academically. I am grateful for the dedication and patience of the educators who went above and beyond for me.

I enlisted in the U.S. Army in my senior year of high school and will head to Basic Training after I graduate. While serving on active duty, I will also pursue my bachelor’s degree in education. I am looking forward to serving and helping other people, just like the Soldiers that helped me after the earthquake in Haiti.

I owe my success to my parents, family, community, and every educator that has touched my life. You all have helped mold me into the person I am today.

Thank you, and Go Army!

U.S. ARMY



Future Soldier Hodges with her U.S. Army Recruiters, Sergeant First Class Michael Marl (left) and Staff Sergeant Connor Demo.