



L-R: Sylvia & Matthew Bennett

Why the U.S. Army Chaplaincy? - Sylvia Bennett

In 2017, I began working for the Veterans Benefits Administration. I worked claims for veterans seeking disability compensation from injuries they incurred in service; and daily I see the dire need for chaplains, especially women chaplains, in the military. In 2018, I was chosen to work on a special team to handle Military Sexual Trauma claims, and have been shocked at the number of claims, from both men and women, stating they were unable to report issues of depression, anxiety, or sexual assault, to their chaplains because they were uncomfortable, or too embarrassed, to speak to their male chaplains.

When my veteran colleagues found out I was obtaining my degree in Divinity, they insisted I become an Army chaplain. They all asserted that with my personality and my love for people, I would be perfect for the job. At first, I was against the idea. I figured I could become a VA chaplain instead, but after seeing the great need for military chaplains in my work I began to open my heart up to the possibility.

In June 2019, while I was in meditation and prayer, I heard the call of God to become an Army chaplain. I began to research the qualifications and give much thought into how I measured up to them. I considered my physical attributes, my religious convictions, and mental preparedness. I have spent much time in prayer and am sure that I am ready to answer the call to serve soldiers in the Army through chaplaincy.

God has given me unique gifts that would be beneficial for Army chaplaincy, such as the spiritual gifts of mercy, knowledge, teaching, and wisdom. I am also an excellent team player and do not mind working in a pluralistic setting. I keep myself in great shape physically, mentally, and emotionally and I always put the needs of others before my own. I believe I can handle the rigorous life of being a soldier all while providing comfort and smiles to the soldiers who need it.