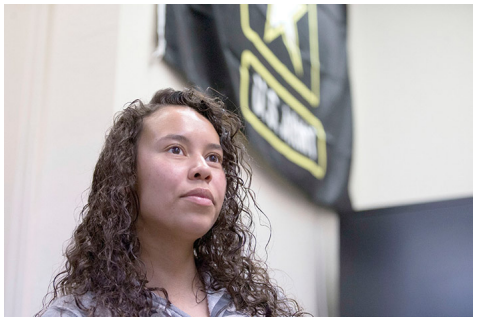
Written by By Bernie Dotson For the Sun
Friday, 06 April 2018 07:05

School	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	Total
Crownpoint High	1		2	3
Gallup High	7	14	16	37
Gallup Central High	7	6	2	15
Miyamura High	2	12	13	27
Navajo Pine High	19			19
Ramah High	1		1	2
Thoreau High	1		3	4
Tohatchi High		1	1	2
Tse Yi' Gai High	1			1





Pam Dabbs wants to be all she can be

Pamela Dabbs says she hopes to one day study at a major university and become a nurse or surgeon, but come this summer, she will be tackling another ambitious goal—that of joining the U.S. Army.

"It's something I've thought about for a long time and it's something that I want to do," Dabbs, 19, and a senior at Gallup High School, said. "I've talked to a lot of people about the decision and what it means. I've already enlisted and I'm planning to leave after I graduate."

Dabbs is a Gallup native and one of the few females in the state of New Mexico wanting to join a military infantry unit. An infantry soldier is trained in combat skills and forms the backbone of modern military capability. Soldiers see service in various types of service throughout the world, in peacetime, peacekeeping and warlike activities.

Dabbs says she possess an affinity for guns—"all kinds," she says, something that will give her an immediate advantage come June 24, which is the date Dabbs gets shipped off to Fort Benning, Ga., for 14 weeks of basic training at the U.S. Army Airborne School.

"I've been preparing myself mentally and physically, so in that respect I'm ready," Dabbs said. "It's going to be different from what I'm used to doing here in Gallup."

A Rarity for Gallup

U.S. Army Sgt. First Class James Stosh, a U.S. Army recruiter based in Gallup, said there aren't many women who sign up for military duty right out of high school around the Indian Capital or anywhere else throughout New Mexico, much less ones who request infantry duty.

And that makes Dabbs, the sole person in her family to go into the military, a rarity. Stosh's recruiting radius covers 22,000 square miles, inclusive of 23 high schools in McKinley, Cibola and Apache counties.

"Most women don't go right into infantry duty," Stosh, a Tampa, Fla., native said. Stosh carries two stints in Iraq. "I can think of only one (female) over the last couple of years who sought infantry duty, but that person ended up getting out of the commitment."

The 5-feet-3, 126-pound Dabbs ran track and played soccer at Gallup High and said the transition from civilian to military life might be a big adjustment. She was a cheerleader at Gallup High. Her mother Tessie Sheriffe said when "Pam" puts her mind to something, the rest is pretty much history.

"I'm fully behind her in what she wants to do," Sheriffe said. "I think she'll do OK. I fully support her."

Stosh noted that only over the past two or three years has the Army actually allowed females to go into infantry duty.

"Gallup High School said they have 15 to 18 students who want to join the military," Pauletta White, assistant superintendent at Gallup-McKinley County Schools, said. "We don't know if they actually will or not."

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