

ARMY

An Army of One

If you think the Army is only guns and tanks, think again. Today's U.S. Army is a high-tech operation, featuring cutting-edge technology in diagnostics, communications and more.

What does that mean for you? It means the chance to work in one of more than 200 career fields, ranging from computers and electronics to avionics and healthcare.

Okay, so what about the time commitment, you ask? For qualified applicants, the Army offers a two-year enlistment option, plus training time. You can choose training in a designated skill and earn a \$5,000 bonus plus up to \$26,500 for college or vo-tech training after you complete your tour of duty.

Melissa Cornn, of Winchester, Kentucky, joined the Army looking to get beyond a job where she was "stuck in one city or one place." Now stationed at Ft. Carson, Colorado, Melissa says she's found a "feeling of exhilaration from being in the Army. (It) always challenges me every day."

WEBSITE: <http://www.goarmy.com/active.htm>

SIGNING BONUS: Up to \$20,000

NUMBER OF CAREER FIELDS: 200+

MONEY FOR EDUCATION: Up to \$50,000 through the Army College Fund and the Montgomery GI Bill or up to \$65,000 toward college loan repayment.

BASIC TRAINING: Nine weeks

ACADEMY: The United States Military Academy at West Point, New York

AIR FORCE

Aim High

Okay, so being an Air Force pilot would be pretty cool. But if flying's not your thing or your vision doesn't meet the Air Force standard, there are still more than 150 different careers within the Air Force.

In fact, most Air Force jobs are like those you'd find in your own home town: construction trades, shipping and warehouse management, telephone/cable repairers and installers, firefighters and law enforcement, jet, auto and diesel mechanics, medical technicians and air traffic controllers.

The training you'll receive at the Air Force Technical Training Centers is similar to high-level vocational or college training.

After your tour of duty – which ranges from four to six years, depending on the job you select – you can elect to put your skills to work in the civilian sector or continue in the Air Force. The choice is up to you! Aim high!

WEBSITE: <http://www.airforce.com>

SIGNING BONUS: Up to \$12,000, depending on the job

NUMBER OF CAREER FIELDS: 150+

MONEY FOR EDUCATION: Up to \$19,000 through the Montgomery G.I.

Bill; 75% tuition reimbursement for active-duty personnel

BASIC TRAINING: Six weeks

PILOT VISION REQUIREMENT: 20/50 for pilots, 20/200 for navigators, both correctable to 20/20. (Applicants who've undergone LASIK surgery are ineligible for aviation duty. A limited number of medical waivers, with strict requirements, are available for applications who have a history of Photo Refractive Keratectomy.)

ACADEMY: The Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado