Every Wednesday we are sure to see fellow Creighton students walking around in uniform, camouflage and dress blues alternating from week to week. Sometimes you smile at them, but most of the time you laugh at their uniforms and the fact that they cannot stroll into class in their pajamas, like you and your friends. However, have you ever taken a moment to thank them for volunteering to protect your country? I thought so. Those uniforms that you laugh at are property on the United States, and the people wearing them are members of the Air Force and Army ROTC programs. These programs provide officer training so that when these fellow Creightonians graduate they can serve in active duty.

A member of the Air Force ROTC program, Regina Zeleski, filled me in on what it is like for a female to participate in these programs, and why the Air Force is an important part of her life. Regina, a sophomore, knew she wanted to be in the Air Force long before she set foot on Creighton’s campus. Her main reasons for joining are her love for travel, adventures and the challenges this program offers. Regina blames her love for traveling on her father, who is in the Army and is currently overseas. Her family moved during Regina’s childhood whenever he was re-stationed. Even though service is in the family, Regina says her father never envisioned her in the service when she was younger. When she decided to join Regina’s father did push her in the direction of the Air Force, “He said that they have better facilities and that they treat women nicer.” Regina tells me as she finishes writing her father an email.

Regina notices the good and the bad points of being a female in the males dominated Air Force. The Air Force holds a double standard, if you are working hard and doing well you are more likely to get praised, but if you are slacking it is more likely to be noticed. However, Regina recognizes that being a female does lead to some discrimination. For example, promotion wise combat experience is a factor but females are not allowed in combat, this means that male airmen are promoted more frequently than females.

The double standard does not bother C/3C Regina Kay Zeleski, AFROTC, WG/GMCA much because she is already excelling in the ROTC program here on campus. Regina is a General Military Candidate Advisor on the Wing Staff (WG/GMCA). This semester, as a cadet third class (C/3C), this is a big responsibility and Regina took it in stride as another challenge for her to overcome.

Regina also is considering making a career out of the Air Force, either she will serve her four years of active duty and move on to other things or she will stay in service for life. Hectic schedules cause Regina to think that having a family will have to wait a few years. Jokingly she added that she will just have to marry a man with a flexible job.

Overall, Regina does not regret her involvement in ROTC. Regina notices the difference it has made in her life and the doors it has opened for her. Although, it is a heavy commitment, and takes away from her sleep and study time, Regina will keep attending the 6:30 am drills with a smile on her face. So the next time you see a member of ROTC in uniform on the mall while walking to mall don’t turn the other way. Instead take a moment to think about how that person is in training to defend your freedom, as a member of the United States Armed Forces.

An Officer and a Gentlewoman

Regina’s father did push her in the direction of the Air Force, “He said that they have better facilities and that they treat women nicer.”