

Hector Hernandez

Period: 3

Catina Barnes

U.S. Army

28+ Years of Service

Interviewed 2018

Catina M. Barnes

On the 16th of March, 2018, Martin Luther King high school hosted a yearly event in which all juniors got the chance to interview veterans and get a first person point of view of what it is like to serve this beautiful country. I had the privilege of interviewing a U.S. Army veteran by the name of Catina M. Barnes. As the interview went on I learned more and more about what Mrs. Barnes had done during her time in the U.S. Army. I greatly appreciate all of the sacrifices Mrs. Barnes has made for this country and the time she has given up to share with me her time in service.

Catina M. Barnes was born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1972. Barnes' mother signed the papers allowing her to be enlisted in the army at the age of 17, in the year 1989. Catina's mother was also in the army, which explains why she was all for her daughter joining the military. Upon being enlisted, Catina had only completed up to her high school education. In high school though she was in the air force JROTC which she highly recommended to me if I were to join any sort of armed forces. She explained to me how the army has been "downsized" over the years, making it "harder to gain rank," that is why she recommends JROTC because it gives you a head start and makes it easier to earn new ranks. Later in her service upon becoming an officer, she

earned her Bachelor's Degree and soon earned the rank of Lieutenant Colonel (LTC). Mrs. Barnes even earned many medals for her services, She earned eight in total. The medals consist of a meritorious service medal, an army communication medal, an army achievement medal, a joint service medal, Iraq campaign medal, a volunteer medal, a national defense medal, and lastly an army reserve medal.

Throughout Catina's many years of service, she had been stationed and spent time in many different parts of the world. At the start, her basic training was held in Fort Dix, New Jersey, in 1990. She went to Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indiana, for advanced training in personnel management. Catina also trained in telecommunications at Fort Gordon, Georgia. She was first stationed in Fort McClellan, Alabama, where she took care of battalion operations, information, and personal security. Barnes also served three times in South Korea, twice in Kuwait, and once in Iraq. Barnes talked to me about how her first time being stationed in Kuwait was one of the most stressful times. She told me how all the people stationed there were ready to go home. Unfortunately though, Saddam Hussein began to make more trouble, so Barnes was forced to stay a little while longer. Also, being the only female officer made the stress a little bit more profound. When stressful situations popped up, Catina said that she would often pray to God, She did the same for good luck. When it came to keeping in touch with family, Catina Barnes tried to mail letters back home as frequently as possible.

Barnes has been through a total of twenty-eight years in the U.S. Army and she has gotten to travel all over the U.S. and also some parts of Asia and the Middle East. When she was on leave, however, she visited family and went to family reunions. She even got the chance to go to Disneyland with her son and daughter. Near the end of the interview, Mrs. Barnes told me

something that I very strongly agree with. Catina said to me, “Live each day to the fullest, and be mindful of what you say to people.”

Catina M. Barnes saw her service as an overall positive thing because she is helping people and serving her country. Currently Catina is stationed in Riverside, California, where she is broadcasting regularly to the men and women in the field. Her current facility broadcasts television and radio to those men and women so they have a little something to watch and take their minds off of any bit of stress they might have. They even have their own little slogans, “We bring you home” and “We serve those who serve”. Catina M. Barnes estimated that she will stay broadcasting TV and radio in Riverside until the year 2020. Catina is planning on staying in the U.S. Army for about another four years until the age of fifty.