



In 2006, she earned her Bachelor's degree in Accounting with a minor in management from Old Dominion University and is currently studying for her CGFM.

Responsibility and integrity are only a few traits McNamara has developed from civilian life and her advice is to have confidence. "There are people out there that want you to succeed," she shares. "They want you to do well. You have to pay your dues and reach out, and not be afraid to ask for help, too. While I'm all about believing in yourself and doing

anything you can to make your own dreams come true, one way to really make a mark is to encourage someone else's dreams. By being supportive and encouraging of others, you are making a difference not only in their world but potentially in the world of others. For example, I've been fortunate enough to have many, many supportive people in my life. My parents, teachers, friends have always supported me and encouraged me. Because of this, I want to support and encourage others and I hope that when I encourage other people that they then want to encourage people as well."



**Dania Aponte (Civ),
United States Army
National Guard**

“Every day I have the privilege of working with an excellent team of individuals whose focus is geared towards ensuring our Soldiers and Civilians work in an updated, clean, safe and premier facility,” shares Dania Aponte, a manager with over 28 years of experience in transportation and strategic planning, policy development and implementation, and environmental compliance.

“Ultimately, the best part of my job is the enjoyment and fulfillment I feel on a daily basis on having gotten a step closer to fulfilling our organization’s goals, and once those goals are fulfilled, moving on to the next project with enthusiasm and great expectations.”

A believer in excellence in all that she does, Aponte strives to be the best at anything she puts her mind to and believes that trail blazers have vision and the courage to see a future designed by them. “Having a mother in the education field and a father in the military, I learned first-hand the importance of discipline, hard work, and education,” she states. “They fostered in me excellence in all I do, regardless of the task; the thirst for knowledge; and, the self-confidence to do and be anything I envision.”

Her advice is to always be tenacious and resourceful. “If you believe in yourself and your abilities, nothing can stop you,” she says. “Be courageous and generous, and know that what you’re about to do, will not only impact you, but others coming after you.”

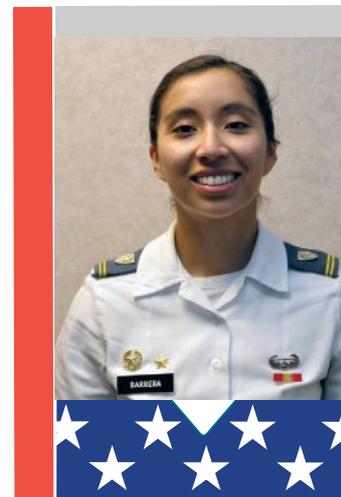


**Chief Warrant Officer 3
Darysabel Lopez, United
States Army National
Guard**

Born in Humacao, Puerto Rico, Chief Warrant Officer Three Darysabel Lopez joined the Massachusetts Army National Guard in 1995. Her desire to join the Army and become a Police Officer began as a child while participating in the *Liga Atletica Policiaca*, a youth program which taught military drill and ceremony movements and would instill a military style discipline.

“I realized I wanted to make a career out of the Army after my third year of service,” she states. “I felt such sense of pride deeply in my heart to serve and protect my country once I deployed to Afghanistan in Support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Serving my country gave me a strong sense of pride and service. The military has provided me with so much opportunities such as obtaining my Masters in Business Administration (MBA) where I feel humble to be a part of the freedom of this country.”

Her current assignment is Warrant Officer Strength Manager, Recruiting and Retention Battalion, Massachusetts Army National Guard, Hanscom AFB, Massachusetts. CW3 Lopez civilian occupation is as a Police Officer for the Worcester Police Department.



**Cadet Gabriela
Barrera-Gutierrez, United
States Military Academy**

Born in Cuenca, Ecuador Cadet Gabriela C. Barrera moved to Lodi, New Jersey in 2002, and entered the United States Military Academy at West Point in 2013. Joining because she wanted to serve her country, the Mechanical Engineering major and club athlete, continues her pursuit of excellence in academics, athletics, and as a cadet.

“I love being able to help people and lead teams to succeed in anything, whether it’s athletics, academics, or military goals,” she shares of her role at the academy. “When I first came to this country, I had to assimilate to American culture and learn English. This taught me resilience and I was able to overcome adversity at a young age, which translated to my abilities to do well at West Point. West Point forces you to fail in order for you to learn how to overcome adversity and learn to keep moving forward. I

