



Training and inspiring military service members for careers in concrete, construction, and infrastructure while preserving national landmarks

Military Service Member / Participant Profile

MARIA VALDEZ

Born in California, Maria grew up on the move, spending time in Northern California, “all over Arizona” during high school, and three years in Mexico.

After graduation, she accompanied a friend to a military recruitment office to hear about career opportunities they might provide for him. But it was Maria who ended up joining the U.S. Army.

Maria trained to become an automated logistical specialist, with her first assignment in South Korea at Camp Humphreys. Her 7.5 years of military service also included posts at Ft. Bliss in Texas and Schofield Barracks/Ft. Shafter in Hawaii.

In preparing to leave the Army, Maria attended career transition classes provided by the military and learned of the Concrete Preservation Institute’s (CPI) Field School program. Despite having no background in the concrete industry, Maria was lured by the prospect of working in a national park and recognized the opportunity to utilize the professional skills from her military

“Thanks to my experience with CPI at Pearl Harbor, I am on my way to a very promising career in the concrete industry!”

- Maria Valdez, former US Army Sergeant

CPI is an official U.S. military active duty Career Skills Program, partner of the U.S. National Park Service, and partner of concrete and construction companies across the nation. As a non-profit foundation, CPI’s Field School & Career Placement Programs are based on public/private partnerships.

CPI’s Field School trains and inspires service members while completing deferred maintenance, repair, preservation, and safety/access projects on national landmark structures and public sites at Alcatraz Island (Golden Gate National Recreation Area, CA), Pearl Harbor (World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, HI), and planned additional locations across the country.

CPI’s Career Placement Program connects Field School participants and other soon-to-be veterans to civilian careers in a growing and critical sector of the U.S. economy. Employment longevity is facilitated by matching candidates with well-suited positions in locations across the country where they and their families seek to establish post-military homes.

FIELD SCHOOL STATISTICS

- ❖ 123 participants
- ❖ 84,840 volunteer hours on NPS sites

FIELD SCHOOL FOUNDING SPONSORS

- ❖ BASF - Alcatraz Island
- ❖ Owens Corning Foundation - Pearl Harbor

CPI Field School & Career Placement Programs



Left: Maria creating Field School sample panels for project approval, CPI Photo. Right: Field School team project, CPI photo. Page 1: CPI active duty military Field School team and guests on the USS Tennessee mooring quay, Battleship Row, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii - repairing and preserving the quays is CPI's primary multi-year Pearl Harbor Field School project, CPI photo.

Maria trained alongside her active duty military teammates studying the construction, production, sales, and service aspects of the concrete industry and the history of this important composite material that is so critical to buildings and infrastructure. In-depth, hands-on and management course work included evaluating, testing, mixing, placing, repairing, and maintaining concrete. Additionally, she developed an understanding for the entire scope of a construction project, including material production, structural components; safety procedures; and project timelines, costs, and expenses.

Although Maria never imagined working in the concrete industry, her experience restoring hallowed sites along Pearl Harbor's Battleship Row at World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, working with CPI's expert staff, and meeting leaders from all areas of the industry helped her develop a passion for this new, post-military career.

Upon being honorably discharged from the U.S. Army, and with a husband still on active duty with orders for a new post in Texas, Maria worked with CPI to connect with opportunities in that state and secured an internship with a large concrete company; she is currently pursuing a degree in Concrete Industry Management, with a minor in Business Administration at Texas State University.



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