

# Enlistments in Armed Forces Remain Steady

Battlefield scenes of death and destruction may have turned some young people off to enlisting in the armed forces, but others are turned on by heroics and thoughts of curbing terrorism.

These combating feelings among young people have produced neither a real decline nor a surge in enlistment—in effect canceling one another out.

Army officials reported 6,635 new recruits who enlisted for active duty with the Army in March, according to KnoxNews.com.

Recruiters in Nashville, Tenn., said they saw the number of walk-in and call-in applicants rise dramatically at the end of March.

Between March 1 and March 27, the Nashville Military Entrance Processing Station had five call-in and five walk-in applicants, Knox News reported.

From March 27 to March 31, they had 28 call-ins and 27 walk-ins.

According to CBS News, together the Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force signed up 39,041 recruits—386 above their goal—from October to December.

Bill Davis, a Navy recruiting spokesman in Tennessee, told Associated Press that the Navy has little trouble maintaining a force of 380,000 troops. Davis said many people were re-enlisting as a result of the weak economy, meaning fewer slots to fill.

Officials agreed that the recent war with Iraq has done two things: sparked interest in people to serve their country, and turned off others who do not want to be in harm's way.

“In a way, it's almost a wash,” Davis told AP.

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Following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, recruiters saw a spike in inquiries about military service, but the number of actual recruits remained steady.

The high cost of college also drives many young people to military service.

Michael Mielko, a 17-year-old senior at North Babylon High School on New York's Long Island, decided to go the route of military service.

"As I got closer to joining, it got a little more intense in the Middle East and I was worried," Mielko told AP. "But I felt more strongly about learning and training."

He enlisted for six years and begins training to be a nuclear technician Nov. 24.

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