



# Making Good Choices Wherever She Lands

ALLISON KONDRAT  
S2S President, Belton High School

**B**efore her goals to attend West Point and pursue a career in the medical or criminal justice fields, Allison Kondrat fought her way through emotional and academic challenges, allowing her to emerge as a bright, young, military kid.

Familiar with transitions, Allison moved over six times by the time she was in 5th grade. Rather than allowing the stresses of moving to affect her negatively, Allison saw her transitions as a challenge to better herself and vowed to use her experiences to her advantage. “I always thought - *how is that person going to impact me?* Personally it’s more self-appreciating when you’re in a situation where you have to change so often.”

As a way to integrate swiftly into her new school, Allison joined her local Student 2 Student® program, later becoming the president. Struggling with bullying in the past, Allison knew it was important to try to make friends early on. “It’s not exactly about trying to fit in, but trying to be relatable to someone else. You are trying to figure out who you are – I still am,” said Kondrat.

A challenge for many military students is the difference in academic standards from place to place. After her last move, students in Allison’s new Spanish class were speaking full sentences, something Allison had not been taught in her last school. “Every weekend I would be studying Spanish to make up for the huge gap. The teachers understand you are coming from somewhere else but there is only so much they can do. It took a lot of personal work to even the playing field.” Allison went on to explain that when students come into a school ahead of the game in a subject, they can only go as far as what the rest of the class knows. And when they come in behind, there’s a limit to how far behind they can be. There is no reward for being ahead, but there are repercussions for being behind. Regardless, Allison makes sure that she works for everything she attains. “It’s about how hard you work for it and how much you dedicate yourself to what you’re doing.”

Allison and her parents, father, COL, USA, and former Chief Nursing Officer, Carl R. Darnall Army Medical Center, and mother LTC (ret), USAR, were overjoyed at the August 2015 news of two females passing



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the elite Army Ranger School. Allison explained the importance in regard to females being a part of the elites is to hold the same standards. “It’s narrow-minded and short-sighted to not include women if they can meet those standards. It should be encouraged.”

Wise beyond her years, Allison continues to use her challenges to her advantage and encourage others to be leaders. She revealed how lucky she was to have people reach out to her throughout the years, even something as simple as inviting her to sit at lunch with them saying, “It’s really special when someone does that for you.” With regard to moving around, Allison intoned, “Although you didn’t have a choice to move, you can make the choices where you land.”