

# Mongolian NCO Blazes Trail for Fellow Females

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December 16, 2015



Every year, foreign soldiers train with U.S. Army Alaska at the SFC Christopher R. Brevard NCO Academy. However, this year, one graduate is the first of her kind.

Sgt. Muncunchimeg Nyamaajav became the first female Mongolian soldier to attend the academy.

"I am so thankful to the U.S. and Mongolian armies for allowing me to come here," said Nyamaajav, who is the only Mongolian soldier to attend the course since 2007.

Nyamaajav and five other Soldiers recently graduated from the Basic Leader Course. As part of the classes she attended, Nyamaajav participated in various field exercises that sharpened her leadership skills and further developed her professional ethics.

The freezing weather and harsh terrain at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson made Nyamaajav feel right at home. She said she hopes more soldiers from her country – female soldiers in particular – will follow her example and have the opportunity to attend.

"My hope is that more female soldiers come here and learn," she said. "Though the terrain is the same here in Alaska, all of our experiences are different, and discussing those differences and learning from them makes us better."

Nyamaajav, born in Bayankhongor City of the Bayankhongor province in Mongolia, joined the military 10 years ago at the age of 19. She said she has always desired to serve her country, and wants to see more female soldiers succeed.

Mongolian female soldiers face many challenges, as they form only 17 percent of the country's armed forces. Nyamaajav said her experience training with U.S. Army Alaska helped build her confidence, something she knows her fellow female soldiers need.

"I want female soldiers to learn and to be strong," she said. "I want them to hope and dream."

While she loves being a leader and pushing her fellow soldiers to be great, Nyamaajav credits her own loved ones as her source of inspiration. "My family is a big source of support for me," she said. "My 6-year-old son is in the first grade and is studying to read. Everything I do, I do because I want him to be proud of me."

Nyamaajav said her trip has made her value even more the partnership her country shares with the United States. "This partnership with the U.S. Army is so important," Nyamaajav said. "Because of it and the people I have met here, I am stronger and a better soldier, and I am so grateful."