



ERICKA NELSON IS RUNNING FOR ARMY SGT. AMANDA N. PINSON

21, of St. Louis, Mo.; assigned to the 101st Military Intelligence Detachment, 501st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Fort Campbell, Ky.; killed Mar. 16 when a mortar round detonated in Tikrit, Iraq.

Lemay soldier remembered as “breath of fresh air”
Associated Press

LEMAY, Mo. — A Lemay soldier was remembered as “a breath of fresh air” during funeral services before she was buried at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery.

Army Sgt. Amanda Nicole Pinson and another soldier, Spc. Carlos M. Gonzalez, 22, of Middletown, N.Y., were killed March 16 by a mortar round near Tikrit, Iraq. They were both members of the 101st Military Intelligence Detachment of the 101st Airborne Division. Pinson was the first female soldier from Missouri who was killed in action in Iraq.

Pinson, 21, was a “model soldier” and “a breath of fresh air,” said Lt. Col. Lucinda Lane, who spoke at Saturday’s service.

Pinson enlisted in the Army after graduating in 2002 from Hancock Place High School, where she won several scholarships and was on the basketball and softball teams. She planned to attend college after her military service and become an FBI or CIA agent.

School district Superintendent Ed Stewart said she believed military service was the best means of helping others.

“After 31 years of teaching, there are certain children that come along that you see who already have purpose in their lives. She was one of those people,” said Gail Bowman, a retired teacher from Hancock Place Middle School.

Pinson’s parents, Chris Ehlen and Tony Pinson, received a posthumous Bronze Star and Purple Heart on her behalf. Her mother said she had talked her daughter out of enlisting once, but she was aware of the dangers and soon joined up anyway.

More than 75 flower arrangements were in the funeral home where the service was held, and a former classmate, Zachary Ford, 20, said most of the graduates from Hancock Place’s last eight classes attended the service.





State Rep. Patricia Yaeger, D-Lemay, told Pinson's family, "The state of Missouri stands with you. We mourn with you."

Dozens of people with flags lined the street outside the funeral home, among them Tom Schinsky, 63, of Sunset Hills.

Schinsky said he hadn't known Pinson but wanted to show his support.

"It's a real shame," he said, with a catch in his voice. "A young girl dying for her country."

