

Cadets to march in tribute

Ten cadets from the Thunderbird Youth Academy are taking part in a marathon-length tribute today to veterans of the Bataan Death March.

This is the 17th year the Army ROTC Department at New Mexico State University has sponsored the memorial march. It has been conducted at White Sands Missile Range since 1992.

The Oklahoma contingent is marching in remembrance of Elmer Parks of Elgin and all other Oklahomans who were part of the original march during World War II, according to a news release.

After surrendering to the Japanese on April 10, 1942, about 75,000 American and Filipino prisoners were forced to walk through stifling jungles to prison camps 65 miles away. Thousands were killed when they fell behind.

The teenage contingent from Thunderbird, a military-style program in Pryor for high school dropouts, will march — in uniformed teams of five — 26.2 miles through the sandy terrain of the missile range for today's memorial.

Representing Thunderbird are Samantha Barnes, 16, Bartlesville; Lisa Bingham, 17, Moore; Nicholas Chandlee, 17, Broken Arrow; Corbey Christian, 16, Broken Arrow; Kellcee Cooley, 17, Moore; Benjamin Flores, 17, Tahlequah; Kolton Harper, 16, Norman; Wesley Hartsfield, 17, Coweta; Joshua Hood, 18, Glenpool; and Alexander Nazar, 17, Blanchard.

They are the top 10 cadets at Thunderbird.