**Type of Article:** Feature/Reprint

**Title:** Major Michelle Knight Mendes chose her military career with purpose

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**Publication:** The Recorder and Times (Originally Colborne Chronicle)

**Place of Publication:** Brockville, Ontario

**Date of Publication:** August 31, 2006

**URL:** <http://www.recorder.ca/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1538845>

**Synopsis:** This is a story about Major Michelle Mendes when she had just been shipped off to Afghanistan. This story is particularly interesting because it indicates the media interest that existed in Mendes even before she died. Many of the same details of her life and dwelt on that would be eventually mentioned after her death—her focus, intensity, worldliness, intelligence, ambition and, importantly, courage. Her mother is frequently quoted on her concerns about Afghanistan, relief about her daughter’s predominantly computer-based job, pride at her daughter’s achievements and confidence that Michelle will rise to the top.

The coverage of Michelle Mendes in this article is consistent with the coverage that followed her death. Throughout, she emerges as an intelligent, worldly, brave, and thoughtful woman who manages to move ahead in a man’s world. And yet, she is often revealed to be feminine.

**Quotes:**

“Michelle was one of the soldiers interviewed at CFB Trenton, and her mother Dianne Knight is not surprised her film clip was the one selected - her daughter has no fear of public speaking, or of almost anything else.”

"It's kind of ironic that, having learned the Portuguese spoken in Brazil, Michelle would end up marrying a Portuguese man."

"His family just loves her, because she can speak so well," Mrs. Knight said. "They say if you don't use it, you lose it - well, she uses it all the time."

"In fact, she added, Michelle is also fluent in French.

Unlike some RMC students, Michelle wants an entire career in the army that extends beyond her obligatory military stint. She had planned to go into the infantry, but changed her mind and opted for intelligence - a perfect choice, her mother declared."

"I was thrilled," she said. "It's right up her alley. She spends the majority of her time reading and analyzing things, and she's so good at it.

"She always loved to read and keep up on current events. When she was little, she'd have a book in every room in the house. And she is the only one ever who could do laps in the pool while she was reading!"