USA 7s player Nu'u Punimata has confirmed that he has enlisted into the Utah Army National Guard to attend Officer Candidate School at Ft Benning, Ga.

SPC Punimata holds a Masters of Arts Degree in Leadership Studies (2009) and a Bachelors Degree in Multidisciplinary Studies (2008) from the University of Texas – El Paso and played linebacker for UTEP in 2007-08. He went on to help Old Puget Sound Beach win the 2010 National Club 7s Championships, and was added to the USA team later that year.

After coming back from injury in 2011, he helped the USA win a bronze medal at the 2011 Pan-Am Games. He chose to enlist in the National Guard to follow his father Nic's footsteps.

"Joining the National Guard is giving me an opportunity to be in the Army National Guard's Special Forces, this has been a dream I have had for many years" said SPC Punamata.

“I am extremely impressed by this young man” Stated Colonel Mark Drown, All-Army Rugby 7s Head Coach and Deputy Commander of the 19th Special Forces Group, “Nu’u is a quality person and a quality player; he will certainly develop into a fine officer and leader of our National Guard soldiers.”

Punimata will attend Basic Training, followed by Officer Candidate School, Airborne School, and Special Forces Selection this spring.

He is also a candidate to be part of the military's World Class Athlete Program and train for the Olympic rugby team.