Every Monday at 6:45 a.m. during the school year, Columbia University student Jose Robledo, a U.S. Army sergeant, joined ROTC cadets as they filed into formation to raise the American flag - a quiet reminder of the renewed military presence on campus.

At that hour, most students "are dragging themselves out of bed and don't notice. Some students stop and look, and others put their hands over their hearts," said Robledo, 30, one of 340 Army and Air Force Reserve Officers' Training Corps cadets attending Columbia.

Robledo enlisted in the Army right after high school, served nine years including a 2003 tour in Afghanistan, and achieved the rank of sergeant. He enrolled in Columbia's ROTC program so he could get a degree in economics and political science and have his tuition fully paid.

This fall, as Robledo starts his senior year, the Navy ROTC program will return to campus for the first time since its ouster in 1968 along with other ROTC programs amid student protests during the Vietnam War. Other ROTC programs returned earlier this year. The Navy and Army ROTC will share an on-campus office.

Navy Secretary Ray Mabus and Columbia president Lee C. Bollinger agreed to reinstate the Navy ROTC in May during Fleet Week and held a ceremonial signing on the amphibious assault ship Iwo Jima. The Navy says it's looking to get more Ivy Leaguers into the officers program.

So far, "we've gotten a few phone calls from students, but we will not see a significant interest until we are into the fall semester," said Marine Lt. Col. Greg Wynn, who works at the State University of New York's Maritime College in the Bronx, where the naval officer training courses will be offered to Columbia students.

Wynn said ROTC scholarships are an attractive lure for students who have considered the military as a career, but the call to duty also appeals to rich, affluent students at Ivy League schools.

"Patriotism is not exclusive to one economic class," Wynn said. "The opportunity to serve your country means more to some than going to the corporate world to make a buck."

To qualify for a two or three-year scholarship, students must pass a physical fitness test; have a grade-point average close to 3.0; write an essay and provide recommendations that are vetted by a Navy committee in Florida.