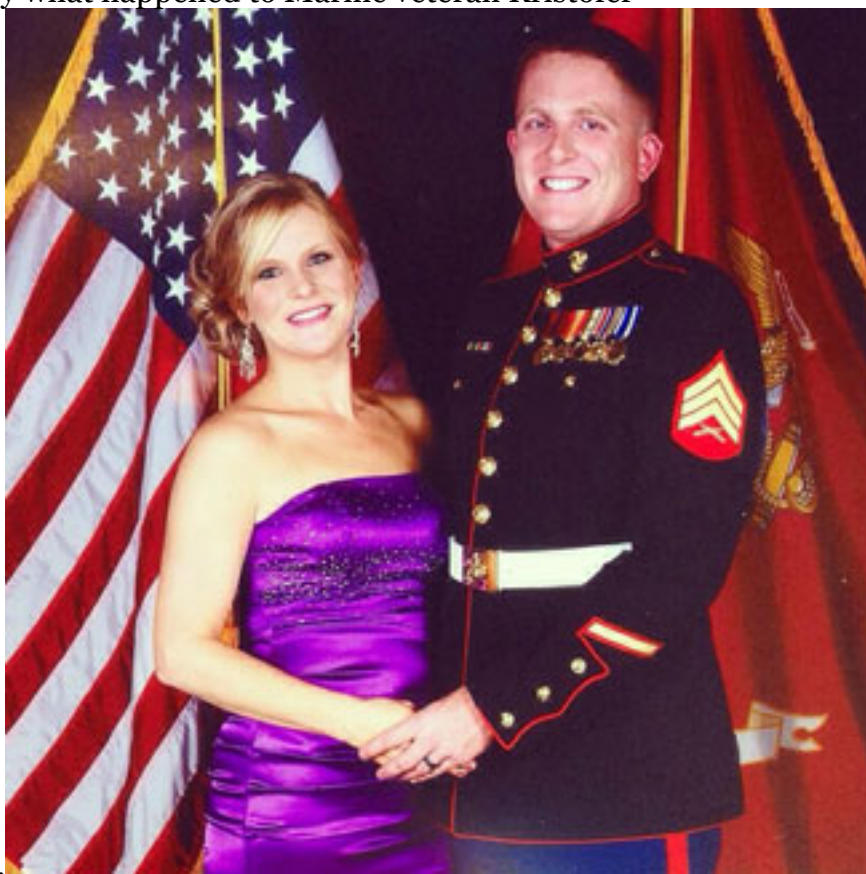


Routine Haircut Leads to College Scholarship for Student Veteran

Family challenges won't keep Marine from career goals

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For most, a visit to the barber doesn't lead to being awarded a hand up in life, but that's exactly what happened to Marine veteran Kristofer



Poole.

Kristofer visits his local Sport Clips at least once a month for a haircut. After making a

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donation to Sport Clips' "Help A Hero" campaign, Kristofer went home and decided to find out more about the VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship." Realizing he was eligible to apply, he gathered the small amount of required paperwork, and quickly completed the application online.

Kristofer soon became one of 70 student veterans to be awarded a 2015 spring semester scholarship. "I am so blessed that I was chosen ... this is the first scholarship that I have ever received," Kristofer said.

After a successful 8-year military career, two deployments to Iraq and one deployment to Afghanistan, Kristofer separated from the military and made the decision to completely change his career path. The Help A Hero scholarship will help Kristofer attain his future career goals as he works toward a degree in Mechanical Engineering at Georgia Southern University. "Many people told me it was too hard and that I should start working right away. I am proving them all wrong. The [Help A Hero Scholarship] is the reason I am able to go to college," he said.

Student veterans can face different types of challenges than their traditional counterparts. Kristofer explains, "As a husband and father of three young children, I can't afford to do what many traditional college students do. Each day is a struggle between dropping kids off ... driving an hour ... studying all day, driving an hour back and getting everybody again. It is so relieving to have [the Help A Hero Scholarship] to make it all work."

The VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" program awards service members and veterans with individual scholarships of up to \$5,000 to prevent the need for unnecessary student loan debt. Applications for the fall 2015 semester are currently being accepted. Deadline to apply is April 30, 2015. For more information and to apply, visit www.vfw.org/scholarship.

Photo caption: Kristofer Poole and his wife attend a Marine Corps Ball.