

Army Infantryman Pursues Teaching Career

Veteran turns to VFW Help A Hero program after starting to worrying about how to pay for his last few semesters of undergrad

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Stephen Gerard, of Sherwood, Ore., looks forward to pursuing his passion for science and education after graduating from Portland State University. He was recently awarded the VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship," and will soon graduate with his bachelor's in general science and geology.

Gerard plans to apply for his Master's in Education, while also earning an endorsement in Integrated Science Teaching.

"The thought of being actively involved in science education really excites me," he said. "It's this excitement that makes me believe I made the right choice. Also, I'm equally thrilled to have a career that will allow me to see my children as much as possible. That's really the most important thing."

Gerard and his wife, Amy, have two daughters: Lauren, 6, and Madelinn, 5. Gerard served 14 years as a light infantryman in the U.S. Army, and deployed once to Afghanistan.

He initially joined the Army for assistance with his college tuition, but related that after 9/11, his attitude toward service in the infantry "shifted to a more serious tone."

After returning home and starting his undergraduate schooling, Gerard began to worry

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about how he would pay for his last few semesters. Fortunately, he found the VFW's "Sport Clips Help a Hero Scholarship" online.

"I'm unbelievably grateful that there are people who would allow me to continue my education when other sources are running out," he said.

"By accepting this gracious award, I will be able to pursue my graduate program. I want any potential donors to see that the recipients of VFW scholarships are real people who are very grateful."

[Learn more about the VFW "Sport Clips Help a Hero" scholarship.](#)