

Army Veteran Has the Grit to Pursue Her Goals

'Most things in life can be taken away ... your education stays with you forever'

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Samantha Bedore, 26, from Phoenix, Ariz., knew the opportunity to attend graduate school would help her pursue a better life for her and her family. But she worried that she'd be forced to take out huge student loans.



U.S. Army veteran Samantha Bedore.

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Fortunately, Bedore found the VFW's "Sport Clips Help a Hero Scholarship" online. The funds are helping her complete her Doctorate in Physical Therapy at Midwestern University.

"This scholarship is so meaningful for me because it shows that my hard work is finally paying off," Bedore related. "Knowing there are people out there rooting for me makes me want to work even harder – not just for myself, but as a way of saying thank you for believing in me."

The inspiration to become a physical therapist came from Bedore's husband.

"He's experienced many challenges ever since his vehicle was hit by an explosive device during his tour in Iraq. We know that although movement seems simple, it's often taken for granted," Bedore said.

She hopes to work with more veterans, like her husband, who have been injured on active duty. Bedore said, "I can relate to them as a veteran myself, and I can relate to their family members who are providing emotional support for their loved ones."

Bedore served four years active duty in the Army herself, and completed one combat tour in Iraq in 2009.

"My motivation for joining the military stemmed from wanting to obtain a higher level of education. I wanted to be the best version of myself, and the military definitely helped me become that person."

Bedore hopes to work with patients with neurological challenges. She credits "an incredibly influential instructor," Dr. Suzanne O'Neal, with solidifying her passion for the field.

When asked what advice Bedore had for other veterans wanting to attend graduate school, she said she would encourage them not to give up on their dreams.

“If you had the grit and fortitude to serve your country, you can have a huge impact on peoples’ lives. Most things in life can be taken away from you, but your education will stay with you forever. That’s something you can be proud of, no matter what.”

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