

Scholarship Recipient Pursues Career in Cybersecurity

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"Thank you for thinking about people like me who need that extra hand to make their dreams a reality," said VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship" recipient Brian Blakey.

Blakey, a specialist in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard for 8 years was deployed to Kuwait where he worked as a cavalry scout, a position the Army describes as the "eyes and ears of the commander during battle."

"My pursuit of a college degree is what drew me to the military," said Blakey. "I wanted to do something different than what I was doing and really challenge myself.

"Although many moments are etched in my memory, one of the most meaningful is the day I swore in and took my oath to defend our country against foreign and domestic enemies."

Blakey is thankful for the opportunity to have earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice with a concentration in cybersecurity from Strayer University.

"I chose this field because someone saw something in me that I didn't know I had. This person inspired me to go for it. In my career I plan to educate others about criminal justice issues involving technology," said Blakey.

Blakey appreciates veteran service organizations like the VFW, because "they contain the tight-knit family veterans are used to having while in the military, and bring history to those who don't know what being a service member is all about.

"The VFW scholarship helps fill the gap where the GI Bill does not. It lifts a burden off my shoulders and allows me to better provide for my family, while not taking away my focus from school. I am confident this scholarship proves just as beneficial to many other veterans across the country. It allowed me to follow my post-military dreams, without the financial burden normally attached to university studies."

He is grateful for the VFW's support and urges other service members and veterans to go that extra mile and get their degree.

"This scholarship and my education have affected me in so many positive ways, I don't know where to begin," said Blakey. "To my brothers and sisters who are thinking about going to college, you already decided to put on the uniform. An education will only make it better."