

Combat Medic Earns Counseling Psychology Degree to Help Fellow Veterans

'I've seen friends in the military struggling ... This is one of the reasons I want to spend my career combating the mental health crisis in the military'

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Matthew Carbonelli, 30, of Lake in the Hills, Ill., was recently awarded the VFW's "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship." The funds will help him finish his doctorate in Counseling Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

"I've seen friends in the military struggling with mental health problems, and I also work part-time at a shelter that serves the homeless population in Milwaukee. I've interacted with several veterans there," he said. "This is one of the reasons I want to spend my career combating the mental health crisis in the military."

Carbonelli served six years as a Combat Medic in the National Guard, and deployed to active duty in Afghanistan.

He related, "I wanted to do my duty to serve my country, and follow in my grandfather's footsteps."

Carbonelli is an active member of the VFW and the Student Veterans of America chapter at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He developed a training workshop on suicide prevention and awareness for student veterans at his campus.

He also traveled to Washington, D.C., in March to participate in the VFW's National Legislative Conference.

"I feel that one of the best ways the VFW supports veterans is through lobbying," he said. "I want to use my expertise as a psychologist to continue to advocate for my fellow veterans

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throughout my career.”

“I was surprised to see how many resources and benefits are available to veterans to further their education,” Carbonelli concluded. “The help is out there – you just need to seek out and take advantage of those resources.”

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