



FOOTHILL-DE ANZA
FOUNDATION

Air Systems Foundation

Foothill-De Anza Scholarship Recipients

June 2022

Foothill Friends of the American Veteran Scholarship – 2 @ \$1,500

Bobby (Foothill Friends of the American Veteran Scholarship)

Major: Respiratory Therapy

My Story:



When I was a kid, I always knew that I wanted to work in a Health Care setting as an adult. Watching the television show, “Doogie Howser, M.D.” gave me an insight to wanting to be like the teenage genius doctor played by Neil Patrick Harris. Although I knew I was not a genius, it was confirmed that I wanted a job that takes care of people, especially those that are sick. I have quite the past with my education as I was accepted by scholarship to attend Cal State San Jose, but was unable to attend because financially, my parents were not able to move me from San Diego to live in the Bay Area. This is because my parents were supporting my sister who was attending San Francisco State University at the time. I ended up attending a local Community College which was more affordable for me at the time. But after a year into my schooling, I enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and found my way in affording an education.

By joining the military, I would qualify for the Veterans Administration program they offered. It was a great six years in the Marine Corps as I was based with a Navy Medical Corpsman Battalion and I was able to stay my course in learning about healthcare and some of its practices. After I was honorably discharged from the military, I became a Certified Nursing Assistant and started Nursing School for a fast paced private school in San Diego. Halfway through the program, I was recalled back to military duty because of 9/11 and was activated for duty for two more years. During those two years I found out I had testicular cancer and was then medically discharged from the service. At some point after my Radiation Therapy treatment was completed, After suffering a deep depression, I finally got back on my feet and picked myself up again to “reset” my life.

It was not easy to swallow my pride and end up at my parents’ house, but I did. As I was homeless for about a year, but was still working a 9-5 job as a Starbucks Manager. If it weren’t for the support they gave me at the time, I think I would not be here today restarting my life. I also tried to go back to the nursing school I was at before I was recalled back to military service, only to find out that the school had been bought out by another company and that the credits that I have earned previously were not valid.

I am currently in the Respiratory Therapy Program as a second year student, the President of our Club, and also Volunteer my time cleaning CPAP's and assisting with special events for Breath California.. I plan on working in a hospital (as how I imagined as a child) caring for patients who have pulmonary issues. Especially in these uncertain times that we are living in. As a soon to be Respiratory Therapist, I will be able to treat and educate others of the importance of respiratory care. I also hope to seek study in the future of the aftermath of 2020 and the Pandemic of Coronavirus and it's variants.

During this pandemic I had to cut my hours from both my jobs, one as a Diagnostic Imaging Scheduler and the other as a Funeral Director Embalmer. It has been a struggle with finances, especially renting in Silicon Valley. I was very grateful for the programs that are being offered by Foothill College as I took advantage of the food pantry and the Covid relief Fund. Because I do have A.D.H.D. and Dyslexia, I end up having to have both physical books and electronic books which became very expensive, but what else could I do. I always tell others that when they feel they are in a hard place to always look on the positive side of things. If you cannot see the positive side to a negative, then you push that positive outcome even further away. With being scared, anxious, and vulnerable.

I am here today, a United States Marine Corps Veteran who is going to make it into a new career as being a Respiratory Therapist. Future planning will lead me to take the Interventional Pulmonology courses which are offered at Foothill College, after earning my license as a Respiratory Therapist. I also plan on earning my Bachelors Degree in Respiratory Care. Being a student with a learning disability with Attention-Deficit Disorder, I have learned that anything is possible as long as you take control, stay positive, and always following your dreams. Nothing is impossible, if you say, "I'm possible."

Thank you:

To the Air Systems Foundation for the Foothill Friends of American Veterans Scholarship Donors,

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to apply for the generous scholarship that you provide student veterans. This is my first scholarship earned as a Marine Veteran Student. Being an older student in the Respiratory Therapy Program at Foothill College allowed me to use my learned military skills on leadership and giving my 110% in everything that I do. I have also taken the role of the Respiratory Therapy Club President and Volunteer Coordinator. Being in the Respiratory Therapy Program has given me a tremendous boost of encouragement on my choice in career path. I plan on taking my boards as soon as I can to become a Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) for the state of California. I do wish to go further into other specialties such as Pulmonary Function testing as well as taking more classes to become certified in the Interventional Pulmonology Program at Foothill College.

I have not always been a great student academic wise as I finally was diagnosed with ADHD and Dyslexia and figured out why I always struggled when it came to school. With helpful resources that I have received at Foothill College, I am better prepared when it comes to my studies. I couldn't have been more happy to hear about receiving this scholarship as it will assist me in purchasing a new laptop for school. A couple of weeks ago, my laptop was stolen from my vehicle while I was volunteering at a nonprofit which helps financially unstable individuals who need CPAP machines that are affordable. My laptop was very important to me, especially as a soon to be graduating student. I am very grateful for this opportunity and very happy that this scholarship was from the Los Altos Rotary and for them always helping in raising funds for student veterans. Thank you so much for this outstanding donation.



Candace (Foothill Friends of the American Veteran Scholarship)

Major: Sports Medicine

My Story:

My military journey started late in my life. I grew up knowing the military was always an option but wanted to try other avenues first. My family has a rich history with the military, which includes the Army, Navy, Marines, Purple Hearts, Drill Sergeant, and two Sergeant Majors. I grew up in a very structured household and thrived in an environment where everything is black and white. Instead of going straight into the military out of high school, I became a firefighter EMT. I knew from an early age that I was meant to serve and put my life on the line for others without hesitation. However, going to college and furthering my education was also important to me. I was the first in my family to start and finish a bachelor's degree. After college I worked 8 years in the professional sports industry for the NHL and NBA. I worked in sales and sponsorship, fulfilling multi-million-dollar contracts and servicing accounts with onsite branding and marketing assets.

In my late twenties I found myself stagnant and not being challenged enough. I have student loans and a family to take care of. The timing could not be more perfect and with the incentives enlisting it was an easy decision for myself and my family to make. At 30 years old I was going to basic training with kids a decade younger than me. I did not enlist as an officer (because I have a college degree), I wanted to earn my way just like my previous family members did.

I knew I would stick out because of my age but also because I knew I would outperform those around me. I was confident in my ability to give everything my all and to never fail without a fight. In basic training, I was always in a leadership role, in AIT, I was the class president. I joined the military knowing I would be going from basic to AIT straight to deployment. This would be the most challenging two years of my life and for my family. As an E4 Specialist, I was taking on roles of an E5 Sergeant during deployment. I always volunteered for additional training and movement opportunities. Throughout deployment in Iraq, I was asked to move from base to base every few months to help support missions and boost morale. I earned two Army Achievement Medals and was promoted to Corporal by the end of my tour. On a point scale for promotion, I was over two hundred points from the next candidate. I have a physical fitness badge from scoring the highest points on our physical fitness test, as well as being a Sharpshooter (missing only one target) during weapons qualifications. Even though I have only been in the military for 3 years, I have leadership coming up to me daily who believe I have been in for 15+ years.

My biggest competition is myself; I always want to do better than I did the day before. I plan to deploy again, as well as become an Officer. Coming back from deployment, transitioning from military life to civilian life has been a challenge. I do not connect with people the way I did before and did not think I would ever be content in a civilian position again. For the first time in my life, I felt lost. Because of this, I decided to go back to school and obtain a Sports Medicine degree, something I always wanted to learn more about. Sports Education is my passion, and besides the military, I took a chance to think this could help me reconnect with the world.

Foothill has helped me find my spark again with their Sport Education classes. I am honored to be a US soldier. Only 1% of the population understands what we go through. Not a day goes by I am not thankful for my opportunities and guidance I have received. With continued financial barriers, this grant would help me continue to further my education in hopes of obtaining a Sports Medicine degree and working full time in the professional sports industry once again. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Thank you:

Dear Donors,

Thank you for your generous donation and scholarship! I am able to continue furthering my education because of the support provided by Foothill Friends of American Veterans Scholarship program. Since coming back from deployment, I have had a hard time adjusting back to the civilian lifestyle. I felt disconnected and out of place. Deciding to go back to school was a step in helping me reconnect with myself and the world around me. I am currently in the Army National Guard, SGT, and preparing for Officers School next year. I also work full time with the San Jose Sharks NHL team. With this scholarship I am able to earn a degree in Sports Medicine and continue my passion for Sport and Fitness. Without financial support, I would not be able to pursue my passion and continuing going to school.

De Anza Scholarship for Veterans – 3 @ \$1,000



Billy (De Anza Scholarship for Veterans)

Major: Liberal Arts/Science, Math & Engineering

My Story:

I am currently in college because I want to improve myself and get the education my parents couldn't. Both my parents are from Costa Rica, and neither went to college. They emigrated to the U.S. for better opportunities for themselves and me and my siblings. They have sacrificed a lot for me, and I wish to get a rewarding career so I can give back. I am currently the only one in my family who has been to this point, both of my sisters haven't made it to college yet. I want to be the first to get a degree. As a first-generation college student, and after doing 5 and a half years in the Navy, I choose to continue my education to enhance my experience and knowledge to get the career I've always wanted.

I joined the Navy after high school to gain some real-world technical experience and to support my family with a steady paycheck. I've always wanted to get a tech-related degree, but I could never figure out which one exactly. I knew I wouldn't spend my life in the Navy, and I spent my time there researching a good field to study in once my time in the military was over. The Navy was difficult, it was 4 deployments on a submarine that was very old and in constant disrepair. It was a very draining and tough experience, with constant maintenance on electrical equipment and computer systems, but it really pushed my technical know-how and I'm glad to have done it. I knew the experience

I gained could be valuable in the industry. I decided on going to school for Computer Engineering, to enhance my technical experience and learn new things about computers and programming that I couldn't learn before.

College so far is a challenging experience for me. I graduated high school in 2015, I left the Navy in 2021, and although my job involved some trigonometry and algebra concepts, I am behind in my math knowledge. I knew coming in that a Computer Engineering degree is very math-heavy, and I am okay with that. I have been getting tutoring and felt myself slowly catching up. Currently, I have a 3.54 GPA, so I feel I'm doing something right. As a first-generation college student, I don't have anyone in my family I can go to for advice. It has been challenging because everything is online, I have no family in California, I try my best to financially support my family while getting accustomed to the Bay Area, I am trying to catch up academically while learning new subjects, and I am still transitioning from the military way of life to my new civilian life. I don't let any of that get to me, because I am very excited as to what is possible in the future for me. I plan on transferring after my time at De Anza, hopefully to a UC school, as to which one, I'm not totally sure yet. After my college career, I do intend on getting a job more software related, as it is interesting to see how software will evolve and I would like to be a part of that growth. I am very proud of what I have accomplished so far, and excited to see what happens next. I have come to understand myself as somebody who can endure a lot, I can manage stress and hardships quite well. The military taught me a lot about stress management and how to plan. I believe my education plan is well thought out, and I know what my goal is. What makes me unique is that I am from New Jersey, I have lived in several states, and I am getting accustomed to living on my own, being my own safety net while not having the military there to depend on. I'm dealing with many hardships but school keeps me pushing through.

Thank you:

Thank you very much Scholarship for Veterans Donors and Air Systems Foundation for your generosity and for accepting me as a recipient for the 2021 De Anza Scholarship for Veterans! I am honored and very happy to be the recipient of it. I will be entering my second year at De Anza in the fall, I am currently majoring in computer engineering with a 3.65 GPA, but I plan to change it to computer science since my interests in technology are changing as I go through school. I am quite proud of achieving a 3.65 GPA, considering that I have been out of school for almost 6 years and have basically had to start from scratch. My time in the Navy was especially helpful, it has very much influenced my study habits and work ethic on getting my academics done. My first year was tough but I'm happy I was able to complete it while maintaining a somewhat high GPA. I do plan on applying to several private colleges in the fall while simultaneously working on a path toward a U.C. school. This scholarship will help me achieve my goals of graduating and hopefully being able to work in the tech industry to work on new technologies and products that can possibly make a difference while also being able to help provide more for my family. Thank you very much for accepting me as a recipient of the 2021 De Anza Scholarship for Veterans and for helping me achieve my goals and giving me the confidence to do so.

Bryan (De Anza Scholarship for Veterans)

Major: Computer Science

My Story:

I am a first generation college student with a dream of buying a house for my parents who risked it all in the 90s by leaving their country to give my brother and I a better life. Purchasing a house for them would only be a small fraction of my goals, but it is one of the many reasons that keeps me going. Being a part of a low-income family meant my father and mother were never around because they both worked two jobs to pay for rent. During middle school and high school, my actions were influenced by gangs and education came last. It wasn't until I decided to take control of my life during my junior year in high school and signed up for the Delayed Entry Program for the United States Marine Corps. I left for boot camp two months after graduating high school and started my journey to become a Marine.



My time in the Marine Corps helped me realize two things; I was a lot smarter than what my grades in high school showed and that I was able to achieve anything I set my mind to. During my time in the Marine Corps I learned a lot about myself and had plenty of time to improve on my weaknesses, whether it was mentally or physically. Life was great during my time in the military but I couldn't come to peace with how I finished education. I always knew I could do more and have a greater impact in my community but I always felt like I lacked education. I tried to brush it off and decided to get a job as Field Technician in Fremont, CA during my first year after the Marine Corps. But once again I couldn't brush off the fact that I was just becoming a statistic that passed up the opportunity of higher education for a job that was paying exceptionally well. I needed to prove to myself that I could achieve more in life than just the bare minimum.

I enrolled at De Anza College with the hopes to get a degree in anything. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do with my life, as I was recently going through a career change. Ultimately, I decided to major in Computer Science not knowing what I was getting myself into and the amount of competitiveness the degree held. Each quarter at De Anza was a testament to my determination to become a better version of myself. Fast forward to today, I am one and a half quarters away from graduating from De Anza and transferring to a University to finish completing my degree and have a 5 month old daughter that depends on my success. To think that I could make it this far in a stem degree after graduating from high school with barely a 2.0 GPA would have been unimaginable.

My goal as a Computer Science student is to transfer to a university that will give me a chance to grow as a student. I plan to create a new culture at my new school and show that anybody can make it, as long as you are determined and disciplined. I hope to inspire high school kids to goals higher than what they think is possible to accomplish. How do I hope to achieve this goal? I will achieve it by re-involving myself into a community service group I would volunteer for during high school. This is where I had the

opportunity to work with middle school and high school kids that had the same background as me. Many of them were facing the same challenges I was and I'm sure many of today's kids still face the same, if not similar issues.

Thank you:

Dear Air Systems Foundation,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your generosity in funding the De Anza Scholarship for Veterans. I am truly honored to be one of your recipients of this award.

I am a sophomore at De Anza majoring in Computer Science, and I intend on transferring to San Jose State University for Computer Science this upcoming Fall. After eight quarters and in two years, I managed to complete 108 credits with a 3.79 GPA. My first quarter at De Anza was Summer 2020, right at the start of the pandemic's shelter in place. Since then, I have made a commitment to my wife and myself to attain a Bachelors in Computer Science despite the challenges we faced at home and as a society. This meant countless hours during the day studying and working late nights to make ends meet. This scholarship will truly help and allow me to take a break to focus on my mental health and work on programming projects at home to build up my resume for more internship opportunities. My goal is to land an internship at a well known tech company to set myself up for success after graduating.

My goal for the future is to continue my academic journey at San Jose State University, while maintaining a high GPA. I would like to complete my Bachelors in two years and get into a well-known masters program for Computer Science. This would give me the best chance to land a job that I enjoy while receiving a salary that would allow my 9-month-old daughter, my wife, and myself to live a comfortable life in the Bay Area.

I am truly grateful for the scholarship support. By awarding me the De Anza Scholarship for Veterans, you have lightened my financial burden, which allows me to focus on my studies and extracurricular activities. Thank you for showing your support towards our Veteran community here at De Anza. Semper Fi, OORAH!



**Austin
(De Anza Scholarship for Veterans)**

As to not bore you I will be brief with the basics. I was born in southern California during the 80s while my father was working in the aerospace boom there, after the bust he lost his job and relocated to work at Boeing in Everett, WA. I was around 4 years old when this happened, and the upheaval led to a divorce which led to a rough life to say the least. I was the last of five children who moved 42 times before I was eighteen bouncing around from eviction to eviction living the welfare life of a single mother household who had to raise four boys and one girl on her own. Suffice it to say, as my brothers reached teenage years they got into drugs and crime as so naturally arises out of poverty so it created even more stress in the home from drug induced psychosis' stemming from methamphetamine abuse so it created an unbearable environment for school

attendance, so I stopped going completely shortly after beginning ninth grade. I had begun skipping as early as fifth grade and mostly stopped attending after sixth grade. This was the reality then. I was fortunately able to find a healthier, albeit unproductive means to deal with it by obtaining a computer and I ventured into a world where equal opportunity existed as an avatar for many years until I woke up and realized it was no better than the drug fueled escapism my brothers had sought. I realized upon unsuccessful attempts at doing things that the military was the only ticket out of that predicament and I joined the Marine Corps in 2012 and the Army in 2014 due to downsizing which has led me to De Anza today. My goal is to obtain a bachelor's degree in business or economics after transferring. I may apply to Law School thereafter or seek employment in the corporate world, the jury is still out.

Thank you:

To the generous donors of the Scholarship for Veterans,

I want to thank you for your financial support in my educational journey and most importantly for having faith in me. I've so rarely encountered such faith in my life, so it means a lot to me. My life hasn't gone as planned but I've always believed that if you never quit, never believe it's too late to finish something you started, that it's never too late to right wrongs, then eventually success will follow and for the past decade I've taken concrete steps to find it. Sometimes it feels like one step forward, two steps back but I've finally arrived at the point where results are revealing themselves and I'm more motivated than ever to carry on.

I never thought I was supposed to attend college because for poor kids, it's not in the cards—or so I believed. I had difficulties in school and dropped out eventually, so I've had to pick up the pieces as I've gone along. I tried various things in life, ranging from construction labor jobs and the trades to driver jobs in my early 20s and without exception, they all led me to the same belief, that there was more out there for me somewhere. At the old age of 27 I realized the military was the only avenue to success available to break through to the other side, so I joined the Marine Corps and learned a lot of valuable lessons which had hitherto not been natural to me. I also discovered a family which I had truly never had. The camaraderie, the loyalty, the meritocratic nature of the Corps fundamentally shaped who I became to this day. My future plans are to transfer to Cal Poly- SLO for their business program and concentrate in real estate finance and development. Once my bachelor is complete, I intend on pursuing several options and go wherever God or fate would have me. Among these are applying to law schools and seeking employment in the corporate world as some form of business lawyer or corporate counsel as well as pursue law enforcement opportunities and finally, seek some opportunities in the corporate world of commercial real estate or consulting or operations/supply chain management. Out of these paths, I should find something in which I could take pride in and positively contribute to the community. Thanks again for choosing me with this financial support, it will help me a lot with expenses rising as they are, especially as I make my transition to fall quarter and will require rental deposit money and various other expenses. I look forward to the day in which I can do the same for others.

**De Anza Rotary Club of Cupertino Itsuo and Marian Uenaka Workforce
Scholarship (2 @ \$1,500)**



Autumn (Cupertino Rotary)

Major: Nursing

My Story:

Love. Patience. Pain. Determination. Forgiveness.

Love, this word to me means loving myself enough to choose a career that is not based on the salary, but based on if the career fits my personality, a natural caregiver truly finding joy in supporting and caring for others.

Patience, this word keeps me grounded and focused on my own timing. I found myself looking at other people my age and comparing myself, wondering why I wasn't at the same level as them. I had to learn to be more patient with myself.

Pain, the uncertainty of my mental strength to pursue a college degree.

Determination, looking towards my family and they're all smiling back cheering me on. They have so much faith in me, how could I not have that same faith in myself?

Forgiveness, forgiving myself for having to take the long route in life. Forgiveness, for having to fail constantly before succeeding. Forgiveness, for ever doubting my own strength and determination.

Within the past four years I have experienced grief, homelessness, and loss. During that time, I was uncertain if I would ever become a nurse someday, I felt defeated. I not only worried for myself but for my parents, they tried so hard to shield me and my siblings from the true nature of how difficult financial instability can be, but in the end, it only brought us closer. I remember being in a homeless shelter in San Francisco, CA and even though my family and I were sleeping on the cold floor in the middle of the winter, my parents still made jokes and created light in such a dark situation. I am grateful for this hard but beautiful experience.

I have learned through my difficulties, that being dealt 'bad cards' does not determine my future. I see it as, I was given these cards to have opportunities that other people will never experience. Growing up in a low income family I should have been another statistic at this point, but my parents weren't going to allow that. I truly wouldn't be here today without the love and guidance of my parents.

While I was homeless, life slowly began to work in my favor. I got a job as an Animal Technician at AMGEN, and found a converted garage with a roommate in Oakland, CA and my parents found a long term shelter before eventually finding an apartment of their own. While in Oakland, I made a comfortable living as an Animal Technician but I still longed for education. I knew that I had a bigger purpose of becoming a nurse and I had to start working towards it. In June of 2020, I moved to Sunnyvale, CA and enrolled at De Anza College. I have since begun my journey to pursue a degree in Nursing. I plan to reach my goals by being confident in my determination and committing to my goal of

becoming a registered nurse. I want to be a role model for my niece and nephew, for my entire family, and for my own future children.

Thank you:

Dear Donors,

I would just like to start off by saying, I am so grateful for the this scholarship. Thank you for being so selfless and truly caring about students like me, who have dealt with very difficult situations but continue to strive for greatness.

A little bit about me is that I am a nursing major and I would specifically want to become a flight nurse. I want to become a nurse because I want to be there for others the same way nurses were there for me and my family during a rough time. This scholarship will help me afford all of the extra costs that come with tests and classes for the nursing program and any other costs for school. My future plans are to become a flight nurse and also volunteer at an animal rescue.

That is a little bit about me and how helpful this scholarship will be for me as I continue my journey to becoming a nurse.

Thank you for your support and I am so grateful for this opportunity,

Autumn

Megan (Cupertino Rotary)

Major: Nursing

My Story:



When my mother passed away four years ago from pancreatic cancer, it changed my life forever and opened the doors to see my future in nursing. As I cared for her before she passed, I found my underlying purpose in life was to provide comfort, a voice, and compassion for other people. With this realization, I enrolled at De Anza to work towards an ADN (Associates Degree in Nursing) shortly after she passed. Now, as we face a global pandemic, I so desperately want to continue my pursuit of a nursing degree to provide the comfort and voice that many need during this time. As the face of nursing and medical care is changing day by day, it has lit a fire in me to excel in my nursing program so that I can be of service during such a challenging time.

While the nursing program was on pause at De Anza, I took the time to further my education in ways that will help me become a better nurse. I obtained Advanced Certificates of Achievement in Communications and Women’s Studies as well as an Associate’s degree in Social and Behavioral Sciences. Now, as I have entered my second quarter in the nursing program, I am beyond thrilled to be putting my newfound knowledge to work as I care for patients and absorb as much as I can in my student nursing role. All this to say, I take my education very seriously and am always looking for opportunities to grow, learn, and apply knowledge into the world while also aiming for my dream of caring for others. My ultimate goal is to become a Nurse Practitioner in oncology while working in a teaching hospital to continue to spread my passion and love for nursing to both patients and students.

The greatest obstacle standing in my way of achieving these goals is simply the financial means to do so. To be a successful nursing student, I needed to leave my full-time job to have the time to put towards

my education. I recognize the privileges that I have, and the challenges of this pandemic have taught me to be humble and appreciative of the aid I receive. The specific financial challenges for schooling that I presently have are tuition, books, and aged technology (laptop) that needs to be replaced to be suitable for online learning. Additionally, help for my expenditures, such as housing, food, and transportation, would be significantly helpful for furthering my education.

Thank you:

Thank you so much for your generosity in support of my education and career path in nursing. As a nursing student, this scholarship will not only support me during my education here at De Anza, but it will also support the future patients that I care for along with their support teams of friends and family. I am hoping to be in the field of oncology to support those fighting cancer and to give them light, hope, and love during a difficult time. As my mother passed away from cancer 5 years ago, I know all too well what it is like to be in the hospital fighting for your life and I know the importance of the rays of light that nurses play during a difficult time. I thank you deeply for believing in me and for supporting my dreams.