

‘I Just Wanted to Say Thank You’

Currently working for the VA as a student nurse, Balderas wants to use his skills to help other veterans receive care after their time serving the country

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Kenneth A. Balderas served in the U.S. Navy as a corpsman from 2011 to 2016 and in the reserves from 2017 to the present day. He joined the Navy to make a better life for himself.

“I grew up with a gang background,” Balderas said. “As time went by, I found that I didn’t enjoy or tolerate that lifestyle anymore. I wanted to do something in the medical field, so I decided to become a corpsman.”

Balderas is the recipient of a VFW “Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship” and will attend Gurnick College of Medical Arts to earn his associate degree in nursing.

“I am extremely grateful for this scholarship. Suddenly, I knew how I was going to pay for school. I could feel my anxiety and my mental burden begin to lessen,” he said.

Currently working for the VA as a student nurse, Balderas wants to use his skills to help other veterans receive care after their time serving the country.

“I will be able to transition after graduation and retain a job as a nurse through the VA,” he said. “This excited me because I can work hard in maintaining the care our veterans — and their family members — deserve after serving their country.”

Balderas has advice for other service members who are interested in pursuing an education.

“I would highly recommend going as far as you can in college while you’re still active duty,” he said. “But there are plenty of scholarships and county programs to help pay your tuition if you’re already out. You just have to ask for help.”

Balderas, 30, has two children, Matthew and Ezra, and lives in Lemoore, California. Once he

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graduates and has more free time, Balderas plans to join his local VFW Post to give back the support he has received.

“If it wasn’t for the VFW and Sport Clips, I never would have finished nursing school. Now, I’m on my way to taking my exit exam to receive my nursing license,” Balderas continued. “I appreciate the way you support veterans. I couldn’t have done it without you.”

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