

## Sharing military experiences to build connections

**Schuyler:** I was pretty much a troublemaker and then I go into the military, I get all this discipline. I come out, I go to college and I'm a little nervous cause I'm thinking, God, I'm so bad in school, I've never done well in school, and so I kept getting straight A's, it was too easy. Walk into class, take notes, come in at the end of the week and get a test done. That's what you do in the Army, everyday. You know, you go to your op order, you take notes on your mission and then at the end of the week you conduct your mission and that's it. And I enjoyed that, and that removed a lot of the anxiety and the fear that I had about going to class, and going to school.

I was nervous being older than all the students, not traditional, I'm starting college at 27 years old and everybody else is 18, and I think, oh, they're going to be like, Who's this guy? Who's this guy in the back? Who's this guy with the serious look? This old guy? But it wasn't like that at all. It was to my advantage. They took me seriously, they treated me like an adult and like a professional and I felt like people in the classroom looked up to me and they'd ask me my story and they, maybe be interested in joining the Army or something like that and they'd commonly ask me questions about my deployment, going to Iraq and stuff and that was actually a great opportunity to tell people the truth, to remove whatever rumors they heard or whatever stigmas that are being created in their minds. I could say, well actually this is my experience and this is what it was like. And that was positive for both me and I think for other people. Other things with school, school is like a great...it gives you a community. It gives you a sense of self. You're coming out of the military and you don't know who you are. But if I'm going to school, now I'm a student, and people say, what are you doing? What are doing with your life? I say, I'm going to school full time. And they say, good job. You know, congratulations, good for you. And that made it a lot easier to be a civilian.



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