

Student Veterans' Voices.

Calvin: I think a lot of people are nervous about kinda going back to school. You're gonna be that old guy in class and it's going to be uncomfortable.

Richard: I was like, oh my God, I don't think I'm going to be able to do this. I'm the oldest person in school, which I wasn't, but I just didn't think I had the confidence to do it and finish the school.

Chaunte: I found that with me getting back from deployments, getting out of the military so quickly, I didn't want to be in a classroom setting with other kids who were younger.

Jasmine: I felt very out of place, I'm in a college environment, I'm working with kids that are my age but still feeling like they're perceiving me as being this very hard military girl and I was trying so hard to get out of that and I couldn't no matter what I did.

Calvin: All the sudden I'm just like a community college student instead of a Submariner, so that was kinda difficult. There is a bit of depression that comes along with it too, because you're not who you thought you were anymore and it's a struggle just trying to find that sense of self again.

Chaunte: I felt like a failure. I felt like I joined the Air Force to get my degree and time runs away from you and deployment after deployment, or moving, and you end up not finishing a degree. So, I felt less than.

Jasmine: I just became very, very, very overwhelmed very quickly. I was becoming, almost depressive, sleeping to avoid class and it just got to the point where I'm like if I fail this I can't get my classes paid for by the VA, so I eventually sought help through my school, because I thought there was more issues than just me transitioning.

Calvin: I've just started doing therapy through school. I like to think of that time as something where I can just express all of my thoughts vocally, even the thoughts you're kinda afraid to tell somebody.

Jasmine: At first it was just trying to bring out issues that could have been the trigger to why I'm having issues. A lot of the things we do is just coping mechanisms, trying to normalize things that may have happened in the military that seem a little abrasive, like the extreme time schedules, stuff like that, and try to either implement it in your life or take it out completely so you can be functional.

Richard: If it's a bad day or things aren't going the way I want to go that day, it's okay, we'll get through this day.

Calvin: Definitely at times it's very stressful, but in the end it's very rewarding and I feel like I kinda got that sense of challenge back.

Jasmine: It makes it much easier to be able to talk to people about what I was and not just come up to them and be like, oh, I was in the military, you know like reformulating your identity again, which has definitely helped through therapy so the personal— intrapersonal relationships have definitely strengthened.



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Chaunte: Having a military division in a school, I would encourage any Veteran to make sure, get ahold of their military division and talk to them because they know what direction to lead you, and they knew the questions already that I would ask. They truly helped to nine classes later I finished my Bachelor's degree and now I'm actually starting my R.N. program, so I'm very excited.

Richard: And here I am into my third year and I make the Dean's List. It was just like, I can't believe this, I could almost cry because I never thought I was smart enough. I just never had that much confidence in myself. I didn't think I could do it, but it's being done and it's amazing.



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