

I never thought i
would do it



I Never Thought I Would Do It As any other high school kid, I had very uncertain thoughts about going to college and about what career path I wanted choose. There was really not one specific major that captured my attention. I always said I wanted to be a professional baseball player, but also had this curiosity of what it would be like to be in the military. I was very attracted by the way they conducted themselves with such professionalism, and how everyone granted them so much respect. Although I had this particular interest for the military, for some reason my subconscious wouldn't allow me to consider it as an option.

It just felt as if it was something that was forbidden, or as if there was this law that could not be broken. I remember this one weekend while the family was gathered one of my uncles asked me what was I planning to study in college. " I'm not going to college; I'll just join the army. " I responded jokingly. It was a similar moment to those you see in the movies when someone says something so out of place that everything stops. Everyone turned and looked at me as if I had just said I was going to dedicate my life to robbing banks or something of that nature. Well, I graduated high school and went on to college as my family expected me to.

While majoring in Hospitality and Tourism I managed to attend Kingsborough Community College for about two years. I can't say I was the most dedicated student, or that it was the most pleasant experience. Perhaps I wasn't very content knowing the reason I was doing this was not because it was what I preferred but what kept my family happy. It was all until the day I found some bravery and chose to explore some new horizons. I still remembered it

as if it happened yesterday. It was a warm afternoon of July 2008, sitting at my mother's house trying to figure out exactly where was my life heading.

Tormented by the thoughts, I had dropped out of college and was now unemployed for a period of two months. At this point the idea of joining the army became more appealing to me than ever before. However, I was aware of how my mother felt about it and that there was no way she was going to let me join in. I knew I had to take some action and for once make a decision based on me, on how I felt instead for what my family expected me to do. I sat in the living room with my hands placed on my face as if I was praying, while a million different thoughts rushed through my head. I took a deep and slow breath, got up and walked out of the house. I remember I was walking to an army recruiting office about 6 blocks away from the house. I think I had never walked so slow in my life. It was as if I didn't want to arrive. As I was walking with my hands in my pocket and looking at the ground I must have asked myself about a thousand questions concerning what was my family going to think? how was I going to tell them? Was I making the right decision? I stood hesitant in front of the office for a couple of minutes before I went in. I went into the office and just said I wanted to join, from there on the process was pretty smooth.

A few days went by before I got the courage to tell my family about the decision I had made of joining the army. At first they didn't appear to be very supportive of this decision and the way I went about it. There were some arguments and pretty intense conversations. Although I felt kind of bad at first, because I had always been very respectful to my mother, there was also this proud feeling that came with it. For the first time in my life I felt as

an independent person capable of making my own decisions. The ones I felt content with, not the ones that would please other's expectations.