

# 'This Scholarship Helped Me Achieve My Goals'

## Following active duty, Air Force veteran Ely Esparza searched online for academic resources and found the VFW's Help A Hero Scholarship

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Before making his way to Tucson, Arizona, Ely Esparza served four years in the Air Force.

"I joined because of my family's long military history and because it was a great opportunity for me to serve my country," he said.

Following active duty, Esparza searched online for academic resources and found the VFW "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship." He was thrilled when he was awarded assistance.

"Thank you for this great opportunity," he said. "This scholarship has helped me achieve my goals and taken away so much financial stress, so I can focus solely on my schoolwork."

Esparza has hopes of becoming a college professor or working in some other role in higher education.

"I love the idea of learning, and I also love helping students and teaching," he said.

He is nearly finished earning his Ph.D. in educational psychology at the University of Arizona. In addition to financial assistance, Esparza benefited mentally from the support as he worked toward his degree. He believes others could too.

"It provided such a psychological boost to keep going," he said. "If you're considering pursuing a higher education, just do it! There are so many resources on college campuses across the country — you'll never feel left out or on your own."

Learn more about the [VFW "Sport Clips Help A Hero Scholarship."](https://www.vfw.org/media-and-events/latest-releases/archives/2023/10/this-scholarship-helped-me-achieve-my-goals)

### NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

406 W. 34th Street  
Kansas City, MO 64111  
Office 816.756.3390  
Fax 816.968.1157

### WASHINGTON OFFICE

200 Maryland Ave., N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002  
Office 202.543.2239  
Fax 202.543.6719

info@vfw.org  
www.vfw.org