

Former marine goes scarlet and grey

As the helicopter starts its decent, the grass below begins to rustle as the blades lower closer to the ground. The passengers stir as they anxiously wait to touch down and finally be home.

“As soon as I touched the ground,” Andrew said, “I knew essentially my contract was over.”

After serving in the Marine Corps for five years, Andrew Heinrich was ready to move on to the next chapter of his life. But, while most of his comrades would go off to begin their careers, Andrew would begin his education at The Ohio State University.

Growing up, Andrew was a strongly-motivated student with an extensive family history at OSU. So, when it came time to start applying to colleges, the choice should have been easy.

However, despite earning a \$140,000 scholarship, Andrew was not confident that college was right for him. He was uncertain about what he wanted to do with his life; and while \$140,000 would go a long way, it would not cover his entire tuition.

“The military seemed like a great way to just give me time to figure out what I wanted to do, while also giving back and serving the country,” said Andrew.

After talking extensively to recruiting officers from each branch, Andrew chose the Marine Corps, believing they aligned most with his values in continued growth and challenging oneself. In August 2010, he began his training- a demanding 10-week process according to goarmy.com.

Once his training was complete, Andrew immediately enrolled in a required nine-month training school for aviation mechanics, where day in and day out he worked on Harrier jets. Come graduation in June 2011, Andrew was deployed.

He would continue his service until April 2015, being deployed once more in 2013.

While deployed, Andrew experienced a cultural shock that, while he did not know it at the time, would send him down a life-long path he had been eager to discover.

“I felt like life was simpler,” said Andrew. “You’re living essentially out of a pack the size of a chair, and then everything you want or need is right there with you.”

Andrew became fascinated with how materialistic people were without even realizing it, including himself. It was then that he began sorting through everything he owned in an attempt to minimize his sense of materialism.

When cleaning, Andrew found some investment documents; and after doing the math, learned if he had invested smarter, he would have made an extra half-year’s salary. Andrew’s passion for finance blossomed overnight. While he still had another two years of service, his interest in finance only grew as the end of his contract neared completion.

Once his contract was over, Andrew began attending OSU in August 2015 at the age of 23.

In his first semester, despite already taking 16 credit hours, Andrew worked at Cabela’s for a grueling 30 hours a week. But, thanks to the work tolerance he developed while serving, Andrew managed to push through with an average of only five hours of sleep a night.

The real difficulties came in meeting and working with other students. Being a 23-year-old man with the appearance and experience of a marine, interaction with 18-year-old students was not the easiest.

“I would say that [interacting with students] is the most difficult aspect from moving from the military to civilian life,” said Joshua Burton, a 26-year-old OSU student who served in the Marine Corps for eight years.

On top of these differences, transitioning from working with the same group every day to arriving at a new school where he knew nobody that he worked with was extremely difficult.

Because of this, Andrew felt alone. When things were not getting any better, Andrew forced himself to become more socially productive by joining a fraternity. This reunited him with a sense of brotherhood that he had been longing for.

With this change, Andrew came to a much-needed realization that would shift his mentality for the better.

“I did have a lot of experiences, but I don’t think five years [should have] made enough of a difference to make me feel as though I had to stand out,” said Andrew.

This mentality has stuck with Andrew, as he is now only a semester away from graduation. Currently working as an investment banker on Wall Street, he plans to continue with his position after graduation. Andrew could not be happier with the choices he has made, and is anxious to see where his career in finance will take him.

Sources:

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