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Period 3

William McCool

US Army

3 years served

2018

William McCool

William McCool always had a strong desire to be a mechanic ever since his young adolescent days. It just so happened he made his dreams into a reality and pursued them, as he served his country for three active years as a mechanic. Along with his extended journey, he became the man who he is today.

William McCool, born in 1986 grew up in Yucaipa California his whole childhood.. He lived with his mother, father, and older sister, as his father was his biggest inspiration for what he dreamed of being for such a long time : a mechanic. McCool claims he was always a “hand’s on” type of guy rather than a “behind the desk” type of guy”, as he figured that out in his younger days. After graduating high school and deciding not to attend college (his biggest regret in life) he met with recruiters from various types of branches of the military to help start off his bright future. It was after that, where his journey into the military started to come into action.

After some decision making between the Marines and the Army, William McCool chose the Army. Due to its larger GI bill and its vast amount of vehicles to work with, it gave him the best opportunity out of all the branches. He was sent to Fort Jackson in South Carolina for his

official boot camp training. Adjusting to the strict order of the Army was a difficult challenge to overcome, but after a few weeks it became second nature to him. After going to South Carolina, McCool went to Virginia, where he was stationed for a year to complete his training. The harsh weather was a hard opposition to conquer, from the awful humidity to all the thunderstorms that occurred, in which he said it was the worst location he's been sent to. Despite all the uphill battles, he was still able to overcome them.

After completing his training in Virginia, he was deployed to Iraq where he stayed for the next year to display his skills he had inherited over the course of several years. He was not relationally close with the other mechanics at first, but as he exemplified his outgoing personality, the brotherly bonds soon developed. With time, they would become vital for times when he would struggle, missing everything that he loved back home.

As William McCool went on with his journey, he of course had to be mentally strong in order to survive the Army life. He always found the positive within the negative and made the best out of everything. He says "locking yourself in your own mind can often be your own worst enemy". In order to calm himself down he would listen to music, communicated with his comrades, and watch movies. McCool had a strong passion for life as he would set personal goals for himself to meet on a regular basis. Some goals consisted of: going back to school, expanding his mechanic business, and getting the opportunity to see his family once again. With all these aspects, William McCool was bound to be successful.

After his several years of service he was faced with the challenge of transitioning from military to civilian life. What was second nature to us, was difficult for him to resort back to, "regular" life. For example, even the adjustment of driving was difficult. Back in his service

years, he drove various vehicles, and it was ordinary for him to drive in the middle of the road-way and assume all cars would be aware of it and just shift away from his heavy vehicle. However, when he came back to the states, the same rules did not apply and he got pulled over by law enforcement for driving in the center of the road. The police was awfully puzzled as to why he was driving in such a way. He then explained to the officer that he was adjusted to driving that particular way back in Iraq and it was something he had to adapt to once again. Also, in the Army his job was to simply work on the vehicles without any say so, however, working as a civilian was more complicated than that. He was no longer working with just the vehicles but the owners of them as well.

Currently, he lives with his wife and daughter, and no longer has to have a screen to screen relationship with his family but rather a face to face connection. Even to this date, he keeps in touch with many of his comrades from his years in the service, despite the fact that his serving days have ended. Today, McCool is aiming to achieve his long time goal of opening his own mechanics shop where his skills gained from service will be highlighted.

Overall, McCool said that his experience was very positive, regardless of the uphill battles he had to overcome. He was able to take some valuable lessons from his service time, as he used the difficulty to shape him into the man he is today.

