

The path of education for me has been off and on but has always been important. Currently I am enrolled in Holmes Community College as a software engineering major. My goal is to get into cyber security and stay in my current career field.

Five years ago, I got out of the military and followed my then fiancé to Ohio. After about a year of being there I decided to take an online veterinarian assistant course. Nine months later I finished that, and we shortly moved to Florida where I started working at a local zoo owned by Rick the Reptile Guy from "Wild Transport" on A&E. He was an excellent boss, but I had to carve my own path, so I started working in the cannabis industry from the bottom.

From this point is where the struggle to get back into school started. I took an interest in networking and started doing my own research as a hobby. That led me to trying to find courses which is when I discovered websites like "TryHackMe" and "HackTheBox", both of which taught me valuable information to build upon, but both locked the rest of the information behind a paywall that I could not afford at the time. While that newfound hobby was unfolding, I was also losing the marriage we had built for nearly three years.

I became homeless and started living inside my vehicle. My routine never changed; I'd still get up, go to the gym, go to work, hang out with a couple friends and then watch YouTube videos of networking or similar before I fell asleep. The newfound hobby was still alive and well, however the funds to pursue it were even harder to reach than before. My job eventually led me to a position in Boston, Massachusetts that paid more and could give me a chance of scenery. I took the position, still living in my vehicle but more than happy to leave one of the hottest states in the summer. A fair trade with an outlook of progression in the industry.

When I arrived there, it took a while to adjust physically and mentally. Having Harvard, Boston University, MIT, and many other colleges nearby was very inspiring. Boston was my home for a year before the company I worked for started cutting people and budgets. After fighting to pay bills for weeks I decided moving back home would be the best option in this situation. I drove for two days to get one thousand four-hundred miles closer to my family. My mother working at Holmes Community College really helped me decide that I would go back and further my education. We looked at paths I could take and landed on software engineering. It has been a rough several years, but it turned around significantly since deciding to move back and enroll. Ahead of me lie great things and unfathomable adventures that I cannot wait to enjoy!

My name is Nicholas and I thank you for reading.