

FALL 2020

## *Edward R. Valintis Technology Scholarship*

RECIPIENT

Ruben Obregon



**CITY:** Carol Stream, IL

**DEGREE PROGRAM:** Manufacturing Engineering Tech

I came from a family of poverty and struggles with hardship and abuse. It could have taken me to a road of crime and drugs or maybe death statistically speaking. My hometown was Miami Florida but, in the area, that no one likes to speak about. You never really hear about the area with crime and poverty. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do after I graduated high school like most teenagers, so I joined the Marine Corps. During my time in the Marine Corps, I went to war to Iraq not knowing if I was ever going to come back. Most of my fellow Marines never did but I was one of the lucky ones that did. I am grateful every day that I'm still in one piece when many are not. I served my country honorably for eight years and was about to start living the life of a civilian.

Adapting to civilian life was very hard at first not knowing what it cost to live a good life. In a few months, I started attending college in California where I found my passion for engineering. I started my goal of becoming an engineer, but I got married and my wife told me we were going to be blessed with a daughter. This put a hold on pursuing my degree in engineering. After some time, I moved to Illinois where I continued my journey in engineering. Hopefully this fall, I can finally make that dream come true. They say that education is continuous so this might be a stepping stone to something greater.

Most of my career after the Marine Corps has been in the Aerospace Industry. It was one of the first jobs I obtained when I got out of the Marine Corps. It was thanks to my military background that I was able to get into the industry. This made my passion for Engineering that much greater. The Engineering that goes into making a plane fly while making so small and so strong is amazing. Not too many people know how things the flooring of an airplane is and yet so strong. I remember watching Back to the future part two and seeing flying cars and wondering if it was going to be possible to get to that level. I was once told that you don't need a Harvard degree to get a Harvard education and I've taken it to heart.

My goal is to have a Manufacturing facility where I can help develop those engineering designs and possibly have my engineering designs. I've worked with Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman in the past and I hope to work with them in the future, only time will tell. I hope to pay this generous scholarship forward to someone like myself and help them reach their goal as you helped me. Once again thank you very much for this gift and your support. Words can't express how thankful I am.