

CBU Designated Yellow Ribbon University, Offering Tuition Benefits to Vets

BY AIMEE LEWIS ('92)

QUALIFIED VETERANS MAY now attend CBU at significantly reduced tuition as a part of the U.S. Department of Veterans Yellow Ribbon Program. As a provision of the Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, the Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program allows veterans to receive additional funds up to 100 percent of the out-of-pocket tuition and fees (including book and housing stipends) for degree programs that may exceed the normal Post 9/11 GI Bill tuition benefit. CBU provides scholarship aid, as well, which may enable a veteran to receive full tuition.

Veterans who have served at least three years active duty since the devastation of 9/11 may receive full benefits of the new GI Bill. Those veterans who have not served the full three years can still receive pro-rated benefits.

Though the program at CBU officially rolled out this fall, Nicholas Brown, a 2009 Electrical Engineering graduate, can speak to the benefits this program will offer. Prior to graduating Bartlett High School in 1999, Brown entered the Navy as part of the Delayed Entry Program with the guarantee that he would go to basic training to be an electrician. Brown attended Electrician's "A" school, graduated with military honors and went on to serve in the Middle East during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

His unit was on a return flight from a training exercise in Lima, Peru when they learned of the tragic events of September, 11, 2001. Not long after, they were also notified that they were to return to their home port to begin immediate preparation for, as Brown puts it, "more important deployments."

"Some of the most amazing men and women in the world—and myself—truly went into the unknown in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and, eventually, Operation Enduring Freedom," says Brown.

In 2003, Brown began his long return home to the United States. En route, he was researching educational opportunities and in a "best colleges" book under the engineering section, noted CBU's listing. Brown attributes CBU's proximity to his family and its reputation for quality as significant factors in his selection.

The Yellow Ribbon Program is in keeping with CBU's Lasallian tradition. Dr. Evelyn McDonald,



Nicholas Brown ('09) is a Navy veteran who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. He graduated in May with a degree in electrical engineering and received the Brother Philip Morgan Electrical Engineering Design Award.

vice president of student life, states "Our campus is a peaceful oasis that offers a welcoming community where a student doesn't get lost, physically, spiritually or intellectually. We are honored to be able to promote this extra benefit to the men and women who served our country."

Brown concurs: "Christian Brothers (University) has a long history of standing behind its students and supporting them and the community. Watching this program develop while attending and knowing that veterans after me will be able to walk on campus and get the support, knowledge, and general comfort they need to start a new chapter in their life is food for the soul."

This May, Brown accepted a job with the engineering firm Fisher & Arnold as a project designer and is currently working on a Master of Engineering Management at CBU. "The engineering program at CBU is one of the most challenging things I have ever done in my entire life. Looking back, it is also one of the things I am most proud of. Being an older student, having to work a full-time job while being a full-time student, almost made my dream impossible. The CBU staff and engineering professors in particular are the only reason I can claim success," said Brown.

For more information on the Yellow Ribbon Program at CBU, contact vets@c bu.edu or call (901) 321-3291. For more information about the Post/911 Veterans Educational Assistance from the Department of Veterans, visit www.gibill.va.gov. ■