

▶ Veterans Upward Bound



**Outstanding Alum
Tyson Drummond**

Petty Officer 2nd Class Tyson Drummond, served in the U.S. NAVY From 2004-2009 supervising a crew of aviation mechanics at the Naval Air Station in Florida. His happiest moments were launching the S3-B Viking on the flight deck right alongside the F-14 Tomcat, during the final decommissioning deployment of Operation Iraqi Freedom. After his service term expired, he spent time in Florida as a mortgage broker, real estate investor, and credit repair counselor. The market crash of 2008 led him to his hometown (Wichita).

With the help of his G.I. Bill, Tyson received an accounting degree from Wichita State in 2010. He always admires the photograph that was taken with his grandma after the graduation ceremony. That picture is special as it sits next to the degree in his office.

Today, Tyson is co-owner of a movement specialist studio called Zen Fitness, located in the College Hill neighborhood. His spouse was finally able to live out her childhood dream with the help of Tyson's background in business and exposure to many services supporting Wichita State such as the Center for Entrepreneurship in Devlin Hall. They hope to help serve the local community and eventually offer services to veterans as a non-profit.

Tyson wishes to thank Veterans Upward Bound and every single human-being that has lifted a fellow veteran up and helped them succeed.



**Rising Star
Akbar Abdullah**

Akbar Abdullah enlisted in the Army National Guard in August of 2000. He trained and served in four military occupational specialties: small arms repair, wheeled vehicle mechanic, metal worker, and Bradley fighting vehicle maintainer. In 2005, he deployed to Bagdad, Iraq with the 2/137th Combined Battalion and again in 2010, to the Horn of Africa. While serving in the National Guard, Akbar obtained his HVAC certificate. He currently works for Wichita State University in the Physical Plant building maintenance department where he puts his HVAC certificate to use.

In 2013, Akbar joined the Veterans Upward Bound program. He wanted to further his education by pursuing an associate's degree to complement his HVAC certification. However, he would have to start over due to when he received his certification. That realization forced Akbar to reconsider his options. He participated in both the summer and winter academic boot camps offered by VUB as he considered his college options. In the fall of 2017, Akbar enrolled at Wichita Area Technical College to earn an associate's degree in welding.

Akbar believes that VUB has assisted and prepared him for his associate's degree. The boot camps, computer lab and speaking with the program specialists have all helped tremendously and enriched him while on his academic journey.