

2017 Rick Hopcraft Memorial Veterans' Scholarship Winner Yovan Vivas to Use Award to Graduate & Assist Veterans

California State University, Fullerton, student and Student Leadership Institute board member Yovan Vivas, a decorated Marine Corps veteran, has won a 2017 Rick Hopcraft Memorial Scholarship.

Yovan will use the \$5,000 scholarship to complete his studies at Fullerton, graduate and concentrate on social work addressing veterans' homelessness. "I suffered a traumatic brain injury in the service, which made it difficult to transition to civilian life. I have overcome the depression and anger that resulted, and want to use my experience to mentor other veterans and their families," he said. "Being a veteran in higher education brings with it huge financial challenges. I hope to use this scholarship to complete my studies and help veterans struggling with tough times. I had to hit rock-bottom before heading back up, and believe I can empathize with those working their way up."



Yovan graduated from Hillview High School in North Tustin in 2007. Yovan served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 2009 to 2013. During his military service, Yovan was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation, National Defense Service Medal, and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.