



The Electrical Association of Philadelphia

Meet Prior Winner - Joshua Maldonado-Santiago, The Pennsylvania State University

Please take a moment to tell us what you are doing now. Are you still in school? Are you working and if so, in what field?

As of now I am currently a junior at Penn State Majoring in Telecommunications with a Minor in Military Studies. Both classes and extracurricular activities are going extremely well for me. I am always busy because at Penn State I am a Cadet in the Air Force ROTC program so that requires me to accomplish a lot of duties in addition to all of my full time student responsibilities. ROTC paired with classes has really been beneficial for me because it has helped me see the bigger picture for why things are done the way they are. Moreover, this program has taught me a lot, the biggest ones being time-management skills, root cause analysis skills and furthermore, leadership.

This past fall semester was one of the busiest up to date for me. After three weeks of extensive military training over the summer in Maxwell Air Force Base in Alabama and Camp Shelby in Mississippi, I graduated top third of the training flight with the highest fitness score in the entire training class. This grand accomplishment led to a promotion within ROTC to Cadet Captain in addition to holding the Position of Executive Officer for a wing of over 140 Cadets. I spent a lot of time in the semester working on projects monitored by Air force Captains and Colonels. My position required a lot out of me, by no means was it easy. Sometimes we had problems within our unit and I had to be the one to figure out why things were happening in addition to explaining to those below me why it was that I was doing what I was doing. From this I learned that sometimes you have to do your job regardless of whether people like the decisions or not. You have a bigger mission to accomplish and objectives to meet along that way, if something breaks down a long that way, as I came to realize, you need to be versatile and fix the problems that arise in order to ensure that what you set out to accomplish does in fact get accomplished.

Coming hand in hand with this, I picked up a few leadership qualities that have really helped me. This past semester taught me that sometimes you have to be strong and be the calm authoritative figure that people look up to during rough times. It has taught me that you have to remain extremely humble, you have sympathize and more importantly you have to be willing to do whatever it takes to keep your people happy and on track towards the end result. Being the Executive Officer for the Air Force ROTC program at Penn State for one semester was an extreme honor and privilege. I learned so much that could be applied to my classes. , I am still a full time student with above a 3.0 GPA, I have classes Monday through Friday and I also work a part time job for the Marketing Department at Penn State four times a week. As you can see, this past semester was very rigorous, but my passion and love for what I do kept me positive and kept me pushing forward regardless of what was going on. You have to look at the bigger picture, and you have to stay focused and tackle everything else one step at a time.



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What did winning the EAP scholarship mean to you?

Winning the EAP scholarship meant that I could go on and further not only my education, but my professional development skills. Coming from a town that didn't have much, I learned to capitalize and appreciate opportunities when they presented themselves in front of you, especially an opportunity such as a scholarship. This grand opportunity gave me hope that I could be exposed to a variety of different people and experiences that could potentially help me evolve into a better version of myself. Moreover, this opportunity meant I needed to pick up the pace and work even harder because someone was investing in me. With that being said, I wanted to make sure that whoever invested in me, made a good investment. The scholarship helped me pay for school in the short run, but I like to believe that I will ultimately be a benefit not only to the economy, but the community in the long run because I will be able to put my learned knowledge and skills to good use.

How has winning the EAP scholarship helped you achieve your goals?

Winning the EAP scholarship has allowed me to achieve my short-term goals of staying in college and continuing my journey through an environment that fosters continuous improvement. I have learned a lot and I have picked up a variety of skills that I believe have given me the upper hand when compared to my peers. This scholarship has allowed me to continue my education and military training in the short run, but I have confidence that it will also help me in the long run by commissioning as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Air Force where someday I can fight for my country and give back to the community that was generous enough to help me along the way. Winning this scholarship gave me hope that there was more awaiting me, not just in school, ROTC, not even tomorrow, but more waiting for me to work towards in the future!