

# The Ambition Take Off



## **Military & Veteran Services**

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Midshipman Jesus Jimenez Lopez saw life through the eyes of a small-town boy growing up in Caldwell, Idaho. From early on, he knew that he wanted to move beyond the borders of small town living to life in a bigger world. While he did not originally intend to go to school and was instead planning to enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps, he heard of the University of Idaho's ROTC program and decided to try it out for a year to see how it worked. "You spend three years as this nerdy kid in a uniform, seeing if it was actually worth it," Jimenez says. It turned out to be a great fit.



The idea of doing something great with his life, such as being a Marine Aviator, motivates him. As the only man in his family, he also wants to make his mom, sisters and nieces proud and provide a good leadership example for them. "I was raised this way, and I carry this mindset of wanting to be better every single day. I want to have something that I can say I'm proud of, like a career in the military. Or at least a good head start for what is to come. I want to do something my future family or even my nieces or my mom can be proud of."

Midshipman Jimenez graduates this coming December 2025 with a bachelors in Exercise Sciences. He has found it fascinating, "Who knew how much the human body could be analyzed?" From

here, his plan is to complete The Basic School in Quantico, Virginia before heading to flight school where he is hoping for selection to fly jets.

He recognizes that he could not have gotten where he is now by himself. In particular, one of his professors, Dr. Josh Bailey, has guided and encouraged him through school.

"Dr. Bailey was one of my favorite mentors here. He's a super laid-back guy, super straight forward, and I want to be like that guy, like my mentor."

Jimenez knows that adventure is in front of him, and he hopes to become the best Marine pilot he can, possibly becoming a Naval Flight Instructor or a Marine Officer Selection Officer. He wants to encourage and lead future Marines in the same way Dr. Bailey has encouraged him. When asked about his plans after the military, he mentioned possibly coming back to U of I and completing a master's or Ph.D to become a bio-mechanist. For now, though, he looks forward to his career as a pilot for the Marine Corps. As he said, "I'm planning to give the Marine Corps a minimum of 10 years to dedicate to becoming a Naval Aviator."



Jimenez has enjoyed his years at the University of Idaho. Thus far, his favorite accomplishment has been earning the title Marine. "Over the summer we go to ... Officer Candidate School. It's the last hump to get over to actually be named a Marine. Getting my insignia of an Eagle Globe and Anchor was my greatest accomplishment."

*Article by Rachel G Nelson  
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