

Alejandro Ramirez

City and state: Harahan, LA

High school attended: Lakes High School

Graduation year: 1999

Colleges attended/degrees earned:

- Hawaii Pacific University, Bachelor of Science
- University of New Orleans, Master of Science in Engineering Management
- John Hopkins University, Master of Applied Economics, Concentration in Financial Economics



Current career/job:

Engineer at Kongsberg, a Norwegian technology corporation.

Describe the path you took from high school graduation to where you are today:

I joined the US Air Force in 1999, was lucky and became stationed in Hawaii for four years. While in Honolulu, I worked at night for the Air Force and went to school during the day for a bachelor's degree. After college graduation I completed the OCT exam but didn't score high enough to become a military officer. Consequently, I decided to try my luck out of the military. After my military service I became employed as an engineer for a Norwegian company (Kongsberg), where I work to this date. Subsequently, I completed a master's in engineering management and was later accepted to Johns Hopkins University to complete a master's in applied economics.

How did your experiences in Clover Park School District help prepare you for this path?

Lakes High School was a stepping stone which allowed me to complete the requirements to join the US Air Force.

Who was the most influential teacher or administrator to you as a student in the district? Why?

I can't remember his name, but it was my physics teacher. As a senior I asked him if I would be

accepted to AP physics and he said I did not show to be capable due to my lack of knowledge in mathematics. Those words resonated and pushed me to do better so that next time I had a challenge my skills would not be a deterrent.

Do you have any favorite memories from when you attended school in Clover Park School District?

Now that I am 36 and my life is made up of travel, customers, business plans, budgets and so many other things that keep me busy, if I really think about it, the memory that stands out to me the most would be the times that I arrived early to school and was able to spend time in the cafeteria before the school became lively; while it was relatively peaceful. It was nice to see friends as they came in. I remember them coming to where I was sitting and having a small chat as we watched the school come alive.

What opportunities exist in your career sector for new graduates? Is post-secondary education required for this field?

My field requires an engineering degree. There are some exceptions made for people with extensive experience. However, it is not often that a person is at a high level in this field without a college education.