

**Biography for Eric Mason,**  
**Regents' Scholar Award 2011**

Eric Mason is a senior at Nevada State College. In May 2011 he will graduate Summa cum Laude with a B.A. in Psychology and a Minor in Counseling. He has a 3.97 GPA and was nominated as an outstanding student and person by multiple faculty.

Eric is a U.S. Navy veteran; he was stationed at Camp Pendleton during the 1991 Persian Gulf War, serving as a hospital corpsman and EMT at the hospital designated to be the central casualty-receiving institution on the west coast. He received an Associate's degree in Accounting from Southeast Community College in Lincoln, Nebraska, before moving to Las Vegas in 1995.

While Eric experienced initial success in Las Vegas, by the early 2000's Eric was battling drug addiction, a condition that runs in his family. He lost his job, his personal relationships, and eventually found himself homeless. He entered a drug rehabilitation facility five years ago and the experience changed his life. He has been drug-free ever since, and has dedicated his life to helping others who face the difficult situation he once found himself in. Upon the advice of one of his counselors, he enrolled at NSC with the goal of ultimately becoming an addiction counselor himself. After graduation he plans to enroll in a Master's of Social Work program. He has also begun an internship at Monte Vista Hospital so he can complete the Certified Alcohol and Dependency Counseling (CDAC) program to be a certified drug counselor.

While earning his degree, Eric worked as a manager at Outback Steakhouse, where he was employer of the month three times; he is now a Certified Classroom Trainer for the company, providing training for new employees. He volunteers for groups such as Aid for AIDS of Nevada (AFAN), Sin City Sisters, Southern Nevada Association of Pride, and the Laughlin River Run, among others.

His passion is sharing his story and serving as an example to others that even against long odds, with access to the right resources, individuals can overcome addiction. He hopes to eventually work with the Clark County Drug Court, providing the type of support and guidance that were essential for his own success.