
**Age:** 43  
**Occupation:** Senior vice president at Morgan Stanley

During a tour of duty in war-torn Afghanistan, retired Lt. Col. Kurt Neddenriep met a young Army interpreter named Aimal Halim. Neddenriep promised his own financial support for Halim if he attended the University. Halim graduated in May with a degree in political science and a 3.2 GPA. Neddenriep is the author of *Combat Finance: How Military Values and Discipline Will Help You Achieve Financial Freedom*, which combines his finance and military expertise.

What has your life been like since graduation?

It has been an amazing, non-stop journey. Shortly after graduation, I drove my Jeep across the country to Fort Knox, Ky., to attend the Army Armor Officer Basic Course. After completing the course, I drove to Washington, D.C., to meet up with two fellow Nevada grads and we began a two-week trip up the East Coast and back across the country. When we returned to Reno it seems things never slowed down, but they never got boring either. I joined Dean Witter (now Morgan Stanley) as a financial adviser and opened the Elko office a year later; continued to progress in my National Guard career, retiring in 2013 as a lieutenant colonel after 23 years of service; met the girl of my dreams and married her 14 years ago. Katie (’07MBA) is a Nevada graduate, so I definitely married up!

What are your fondest memories of Nevada?

I certainly appreciate the education I received, especially my business and finance classes, which I apply to my career every day. But my fondest memories are of the enduring friendships that began through my fraternity and ROTC participation. These include my best friend, who was also the best man at my wedding, and many of my closest friends to this day.

What have you done that you are most proud of?

Joining the Nevada Army National Guard while a freshman at Nevada and marrying Katie are the two things I am most proud of, and that have had the biggest impact on my life. Both of them gave me the strength and confidence to accomplish more than I ever dreamed of as a young college student. Without Katie’s support, I would not have been able to succeed in two simultaneous careers, and without the Nevada National Guard, I would not have served in Afghanistan where I met Aimal Halim, my Afghan brother. He has been a real blessing in our lives. Without my Afghanistan experience, Capt. Doug Seymour wouldn’t have suggested that I write a book and call it *Combat Finance*. It seems that all of the big moments in my life circle back to Katie and the Nevada Army National Guard.

What advice would you give someone just starting out after college?

Strive to master your chosen profession or trade, but also take action and get involved. I didn’t even own a TV until I was 30 and I have never regretted that. Instead, I served in the National Guard, joined Rotary, served on the Great Basin College Foundation Board of Trustees, served as a founding member and later board president of the Boys & Girls Club of Elko, and built my wealth management practice and military career. I could talk for days about the great people I have met and the lives we have changed through these great organizations, but I can’t think of two minutes worth of positive things to say about time wasted on the couch. So my advice is to take action and get involved. If you do, you’ll find a whole world of possibilities, and your personal network will open up doors of opportunity that you never knew existed.