

How I ... Went from serving my country to serving my community and local vets

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After a 27-year military career, **Nic Villamizar** is embarking on a different kind of mission: running a new business whose focus is on employing fellow veterans.

Villamizar opened the doors of Jdog Junk Removal & Hauling's new Orlando franchise location on July 3. As its name implies, Jdog specializes in junk removal services.



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The retired Army major's journey to entrepreneurship began when he first immigrated to the United States from Colombia at 17 years old. After a year of living in Miami, he enlisted in the Army, not only because he liked the idea of life as an enlisted man, but also because of his father. "I joined to honor my father's wishes," he said. "My dad always encouraged me to join."

During his military career, Villamizar served as a unit supply specialist, helping with logistics functions. He received numerous awards during his service years, most notably the combat action badge and the distinguished service medal.

After retiring from the Army in 2013 as a major, Villamizar made the decision to combine his commitment to his fellow service members with running his own business. His goal now is to run his business the same way he served his country: with respect, integrity and trust.



Here's what else Villamizar had to say:

How did your military training prepare you to run your own business? As a logistics specialist, you're always in contact with people. I prepared all the support the fighters needed to accomplish their missions. I am naturally a people person, and I have a mindset that is always trying to achieve 100 percent mission accomplishment.

What valuable lessons did you learn in the military? No one teaches you this in the military, but loyalty is something you pick up, and a sense of mission accomplishment is instilled in you. When it's time to perform, you give it your all, no matter what. The military also taught me to do what I am supposed to, and to do it swiftly. That's how I live my life, I never cut corners.

Why are you committed to helping veterans? Veterans put their name on the dotted line for their country, and when they come back they might have problems integrating into the civilian world. When you hire us, you are hiring vets and their families.



What do you do with the junk people hire you to discard? No matter what it is, we look to see if we can repurpose the items. I will ask a customer if they would like me to donate certain items on their behalf, or if they have any other requests. A lot of people think I just come in a pickup truck and take the trash away and then it's gone. We are a very green company, and we try not to contribute to landfills if possible.

What should people know before hiring a junk removal company? Find out if they have insurance. For the most part, people don't care if the person doing the service has proper insurance, but they should. Something could happen to the customer or the person doing the job.

Why do you think Jdog has been so successful nationally? We actually do things the military way: with respect, integrity and trust. Our work ethic and the fact that our actions match our words is why Jdog has been successful.

What do you do in your free time? I like to fish. But it isn't something I could do every day. I have a brother who lives in Melbourne, and we will fish from the shore right across from Patrick Air Force Base — there's great fishing there.

How would someone who knows you describe you? I like to listen to what people have to say. I'm also open-minded. My son is a Marine and he's always making suggestions about how to do things. I am open to his comments, and he's had some good ideas.

Nic Villamizar

Company: Jdog Junk Removal & Hauling

Description: Junk removal service company

Age: 49

Military rank: Retired U.S. Army major

Years of service: 27 years

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