Students are taught from textbooks written by academics who glean their material from other textbooks, which was gleaned earlier from the previous textbooks. Professors now are showing up who are third generation academics. Whereas, when I received my training, I was being taught by wildlife biologists who grew up on farms and ranches, the modern professional comes from the city, and hasn't a clue even how to start a tractor, much less use one!

Abandoned his dreams. His question is simple and straight to the point: "Do you have any night courses that will lead to a degree in wildlife management?" Unfortunately, the answer has been no. The young man went home very unhappy; his dreams dashed. But, that is about to change.

In 1997, I decided there had to be something we could do. Universities are changing ever so slowly. For too long, higher education has meant a student attending class after class, in which an over-educated professor with very little real world experience stands up front, raving on about his/her point of view, out to be one of those life-changing events. Kiyosaki’s thesis was intriguing. He believes in these times, you do not necessarily need a degree, you need an education! His real dad (poor dad) was a college professor, who believed in the old way of working hard over a career, relying on government and then retiring to his "golden years." His surrogate dad (rich dad) was the father of a friend, who was an entrepreneur who taught Robert to establish what he wanted to accomplish in life and where he wanted to go, then to acquire the skills to get there. He joined the Marines just to learn their management skills, something that made his activist real dad angry. Today, Kiyosaki is a tremendous success and a very rich, happy man.

These were my thoughts when about two years ago, I sat down for coffee with my long-time colleague, Dr. Mike Legg (who also grew up on the land). On the table was a newspaper, with a headline about all the carnage going on in Iraq. "You know," Mike said, "I read here there will be at least 35,000 wounded veterans coming back from Iraq when it all is said and done." That was a staggering figure. We both discussed what these wonderful—perhaps
and that is what we are in the process of doing.

The new program not only will focus on wounded vets, but also any person (veteran or otherwise) who dreams to work in the out-of-doors. Through a series of on-line modules, coupled with capstone field experiences, a student will be able to acquire university certification of competence in fields such as deer management, deer breeding, upland gamebird management, waterfowl management, fishers (private and public) and geospatial technologies (GPS and GIS). Since my ancestors were gamekeepers in Germany almost 400 years ago, and since I feel the title "gamekeeper" is of the highest order (the Magna Carta acknowledges foresters and gamekeepers), programs will lead to a "Master Game Keeper" certification, along with individual certifications.

So, now the young person—especially those who have paid so much for our freedom—will have a way to realize his or her dreams. It now is time for pay back. The real test will be whether or not in these hard economic times, conservation organizations, corporations, and individuals step forward to help out. We are launching a major campaign for support. We are not doing this for higher esteem in academia, rather to leave something great behind. Therefore, my "Up on a Stump" message this issue is, what will you do?]

Editor's Note: For those interested in contributing to the new program, write to Dr. Kroll at P.O. Box 6109, SFA Station, Nacogdoches, TX, 75962.