

HEROES

THANKING HEROES



From the Veteran's perspective...

Hello. My name is Michael Schlipp and I am originally from the "Show-Me State", Missouri. I'm 47 years old and married to my second wife. Together we have a blended family with five adult children ranging in ages from 19-27.

My extended family served in the military in various capacities over the years. My father served in the army as an engineer while I was growing up. Once grown, I joined the army to provide a stable environment and livelihood for my first wife and oldest son.

I spent ten years in the army as a 63B light wheel mechanic from June 1999 to January 2010. I was stationed at Fort Knox, KY for basic training and then Fort Jackson, SC for Advanced Individual Training. My first duty assignment was in Germany. After returning, I was stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, MO.



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The Heroes Thanking Heroes program provides six month transitional part-time, flexible employment to wounded veterans or their primary caregivers, enabling them to make phone calls from their homes, most often to personally thank donors for their contributions to the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes. The program also offers qualified participants some basic training and experience working in a "virtual call center," thereby preparing them for other potential jobs requiring similar skills.

While there, I was deployed to Iraq

with the 4/63 MP Company for Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF). Another soldier and I were attached to the 4th platoon at Camp Taji while the rest of our company was at Camp Liberty in Baghdad. Eventually, we all moved to Camp Taji. While there, I was the only wheel mechanic for six of the twelve months. When there was no mechanic work to be done, I would ride in the HUMVEE convoys doing route security and recruiting missions.

Most soldiers become close with each other, especially during a deployment. We were all close with one of the HUMVEE drivers in our company. Soon after our company moved from Camp Liberty to Camp Taji, during a routine mission an IED on the side of the road went off piercing the armor plating on one of the HUMVEEs. The driver and a local national interpreter were severely wounded. Once we were notified of the incident, our company was put on a blackout (no outside communications). Our first Sergeant and Motor Sergeant decided to only have essential personnel present when the HUMVEE arrived. They sent everyone else back to the billets so they weren't there for the assessment.

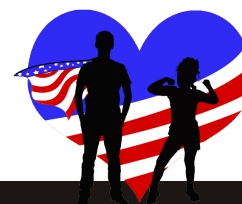
Soon the HUMVEE was towed into the motor pool for damage assessment. The Motor Sergeant and I were there to assess the damage to the vehicle, and the communications specialist was there to remove/assess the radio damage.

The severity of the blast became more evident at this point.

The driver's calf was severely damaged with pieces missing and the interpreter lost both legs at the knee. As the soldiers and I cleaned out the HUMVEE, I recall picking up the missing body parts and smelling all the blood, the smell of copper and iron. A burn barrel was used to incinerate anything with blood on it: clothes, body parts, flesh, and first aid materials.

After cleaning out the vehicle, we washed all the blood down the street so the other soldiers wouldn't have to see it. Later we found out we were not responsible for that level of clean-up. Those images still haunt me daily as the situation has permanently impacted me. Thankfully my immersion therapy gave me some tools to help when I struggle with triggers, like having to handle raw chicken or pennies.

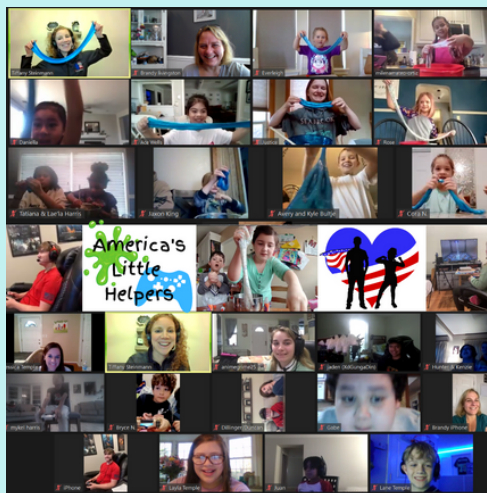
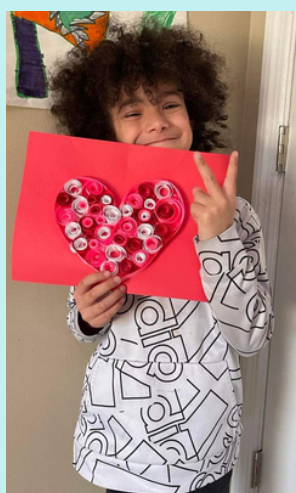
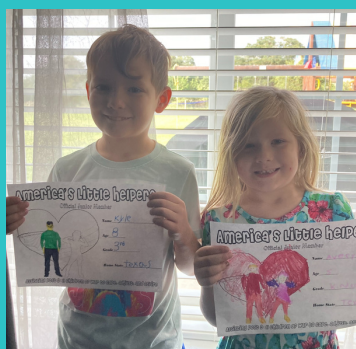
America's Little Helpers



ALH Celebrates ONE YEAR!

A Look Back...

One Year Ago...



What a year it has been & we have only just begun!

In July, America's Little Helpers turned ONE! Program Manager Tiffany Steinmann writes *"While we would never minimize our wounded veterans' physical, psychological, and emotional struggles, the burdens these children face are real too. We are incredibly proud of this program we've designed and implemented. ALH is making a difference!"* in our latest blog entry.

To read more, visit our blog:

I'm glad there is a program like ALH for children of wounded veterans because it gives my daughter a group of like-minded people to be around that know the struggles she goes through.
- ALH Middle School Parent

RETIRING YOUR BOOTS



While serving as a mechanic, I sustained injuries to my left shoulder that have resulted in four surgeries in an effort to correct and eliminate damage and pain. My first surgery was at Fort Leonard Wood, MO in 2004, followed by two more surgeries in two years at Fort Jackson, SC. My new wife, Martha was just adjusting to being married to a retired disabled combat veteran when I had my fourth shoulder surgery in 2019. The pain returned shortly after the surgery. The wear and tear on my body went beyond my shoulder. I also suffer from degenerative disk disease and rheumatoid arthritis that constantly wreaks havoc on my neck, shoulders, lower lumbar, and hips. This impacts my ability to bend, lift or carry things with much weight. Walking, sitting, driving, and standing too long are also huge obstacles - with each one having its own pain and limitations. I also suffer from PTSD and a traumatic brain injury, among numerous other issues.

I am thankful to a former soldier,

Tony Mullens, and his wife Lacey, for introducing me to the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes. Through the Coalition, my family and I have benefited from numerous resources and support groups. They have provided Martha and I with mentors, financial assistance during the holidays, as well as part-time employment for my wife. The Heroes Thanking Heroes program allows my wife to work remotely calling to thank donors for their support of the Coalition. We are forever grateful for the support your donations provide to us and many other veterans. Thank you.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

10/1 World Smile Day
10/4 World Animal Day
10/5 World Teacher Day
10/7 Start of OEF
10/8 National Hero Day
10/10 World Mental Health Day
10/11 Columbus Day
10/13 U.S. Navy Birthday
10/15 National Boss's Day
10/26 National Day of the Deployed
10/29 National Cat Day
10/31 Halloween

OCTOBER ALSO OBSERVES:

- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Emotional Wellness Month
- First Week of October: Get Organized!
- Second Week of October: National Work from Home Week

SUICIDE AWARENESS MONTH

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

DIAL 988 then Press 1
(if you are a Veteran)

Take a Self-Check Quiz

It's always a good idea to check in with yourself if you have not been feeling yourself lately.

**You don't have to be an expert
to talk to a Veteran facing challenges.
You just need to show genuine care and
concern.**



Employment Resources

- [Free career guidance from Fortune 500 mentors can help Veterans find jobs](#)
- [FedEx is committed to making transition into the corporate world simple, effective, and enjoyable for veterans.](#)
- [Hiring Veterans: A Step By Step Guide](#)
- [Resume tips for Veterans transitioning to civilian careers.](#)
- [6 Things Veterans Should Have Ready for a Job Interview](#)



EVERY
JOURNEY
NEEDS A
FIRST
STEP

#SelfCareAwarenessMonth

"I read my bible or listen to podcasts. I take a moment of me time, even if it is just 10 minutes! It helps me to reset and remember it's not about me.

-HTH Representative, Melissa Cole

What do you do?

MADE YA'
LAUGH!

**What is a pirates
favorite letter in the
alphabet?**



**You probably
thought 'R' but their
first love is the 'C'!**

Food Truck Schedule

Mark Your Calendars if you are Located in/around any of these areas:

September 24: Fort Campbell, Kentucky

September 28: Fort Meade, Maryland

September 29: Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri

October 6: Dayton, Ohio

October 28, 29: Palms, California

November 5: Salt Lake City, Utah

CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



Submitted by: Lacy, HTH Representative (with the help of her ALH Kids!)