



The Road to Recovery Report

An Update for Supporters of the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes

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Desperate calls for emergency financial aid streaming in from severely wounded troops as the Fourth of July approaches



Retired Army Sgt. Gary Wynn, severely wounded in Iraq, said, "We've had two cars repossessed, and they want me to pay for cars I don't have. . . . We're on food stamps, and just spent the last \$40 in our bank account."

More and more calls to the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes are coming from our brave, severely wounded servicemen and women reaching out for emergency assistance to simply feed their families this summer.

Retired Army Major General John K. Singlaub recently alerted Coalition members to this development.

"Frankly, I'm shocked by the desperate calls that have been streaming into the Coalition's office," reported the General.

He then relayed the story of DaMon Clemons, retired Army Cpl., who returned home with wartime wounds only to find out that his wife had just undergone two surgeries.

"We are now behind in rent, utilities, and barely have food to eat," Clemons wrote.

Fortunately, the Coalition was able to rush emergency financial aid to Clemons and his wife.

"Without the help from [the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes] I do not know where my family and I would be. I give many thanks to [the Coalition] and the donors for being there in a desperate time of need," Clemons concluded.

Two reasons that calls coming into the Coalition have been peaking, according to General Singlaub, are the skyrocketing cost of gas and food and the continued delays experienced by wounded troops awaiting their government disability checks.

But there's another reason Coalition supporters should be aware of, he added.

According to an article from *Stars and Stripes*, the number of troops with amputations hit a post-Sept. 11 high last year. A total of 240 troops lost at least one arm or leg in 2011. And as America's disabled heroes return home from the hospital, many are calling the Coalition for emergency financial aid.

To help with this overwhelming need for emergency financial aid by severely wounded servicemen and women, the General announced the Coalition's Fourth of July Emergency Relief Drive.

The goal of the Fourth of July Emergency Relief Drive is to assist every severely wounded serviceman or woman who needs help within 10 days of asking for it.

"We took a 'leap of faith' when we made this commitment – because right now we don't know how many emergency requests we'll get from our wounded troops between today and the Fourth of July," wrote the General.

Fulfilling an emergency request from a severely wounded serviceman or woman who is calling because they don't know where their next meal is coming from or they are about to be thrown out of their homes are the kinds of requests that must be answered every day.

Coalition supporters are also encouraged to share this newsletter with friends, relatives and neighbors to alert their fellow citizens about the plight of severely wounded servicemen and women who are desperate for financial assistance this patriotic Fourth of July holiday. ■



KEY PROGRAMS:

Emergency Financial Aid

Partner Appreciation Program

Road to Recovery Conference & Tribute

INSIDE:

Making a Difference2-3

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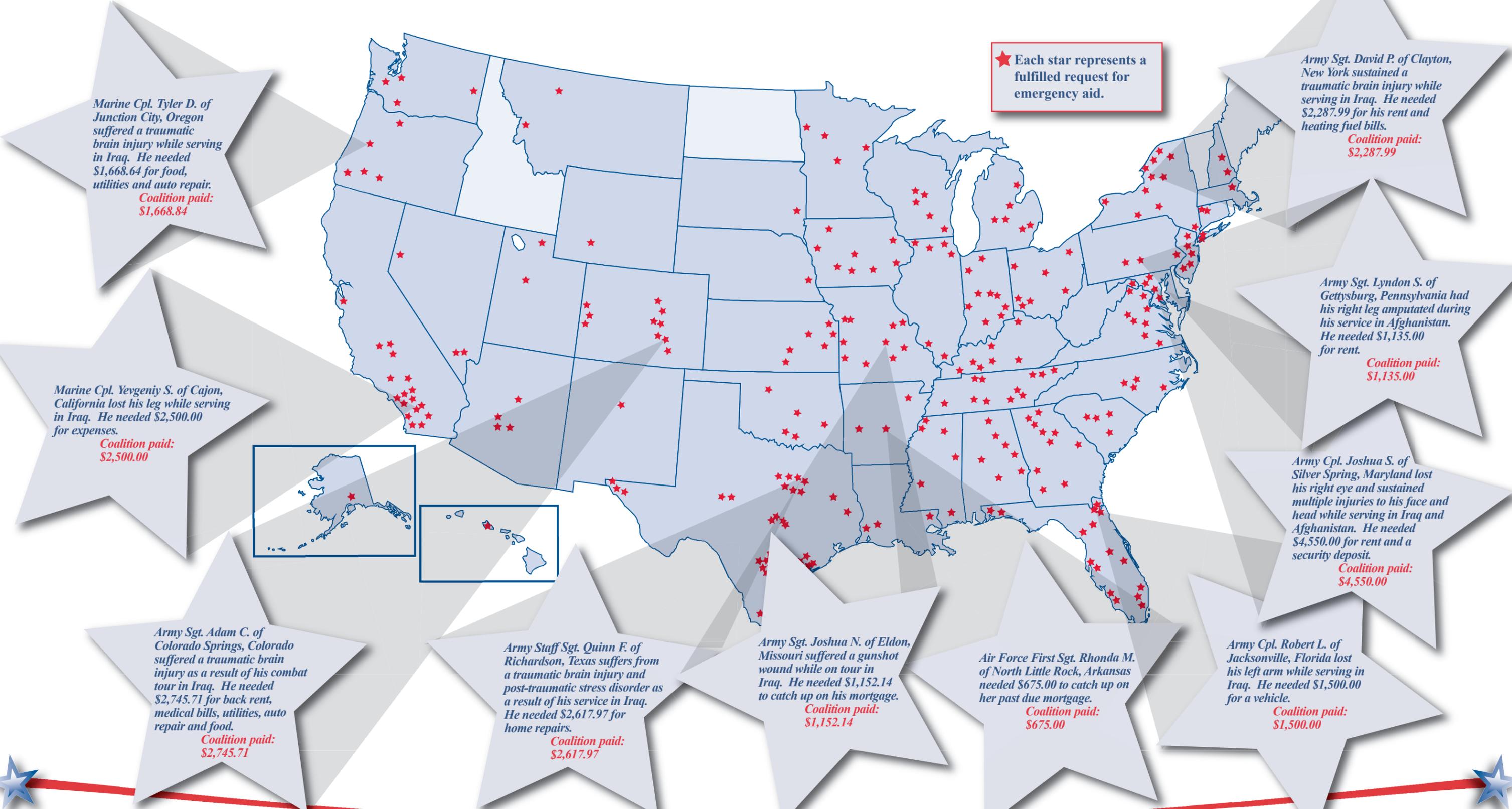
Providing Emergency Aid to Troops Severely Wounded in Afghanistan or Iraq



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Coalition Donors Rush Emergency Aid All Across the Country

Here's a small sample of the wounded heroes Coalition donors have helped with emergency financial aid.





Amputee finds new mission: Helping other wounded troops

Retired Army Sgt. Justin Bond wasn't even sure when it happened.

"There was mortar fire, rocket-propelled grenades bouncing off our truck," he recalls. "I felt a burn but we kept going. My driver turned to me and his eyes got as big as golf balls and he said, 'Bond you're hit.' I looked down and I had an AK-47 round straight through both my knees."

After that awful day in Fallujah, Iraq, Justin endured 33 surgeries over the next few years to repair his battered knees, hip, pelvis and tailbone. The final surgery resulted in the loss of his left leg, which was too badly damaged to save.

"After my injuries, my wife had to quit her job to help take care of me, and this put a big burden on us financially," he said. "Running a family on one disability

income is extremely difficult."

In addition, the constant pain and limitations placed on him caused him to become sullen and withdrawn.

"I just didn't want to put on the [artificial] leg or get in that Wal-Mart wheelchair," he recalled. "The family was getting frustrated because Dad wasn't there for them."

But Justin, of Hanford, California, found a creative way to break out of his depression. He began to help other injured servicemen and women through the Monterey Bay Fishing for Vets program.

"It gave me a new mission," declared Justin, now retired from the Army.

Even with the new mission and an improved outlook, the financial challenges threatened to derail all of his progress.

When his 12-year-old vehicle failed, he didn't know where to turn to get the \$1,900 necessary to get it fixed.

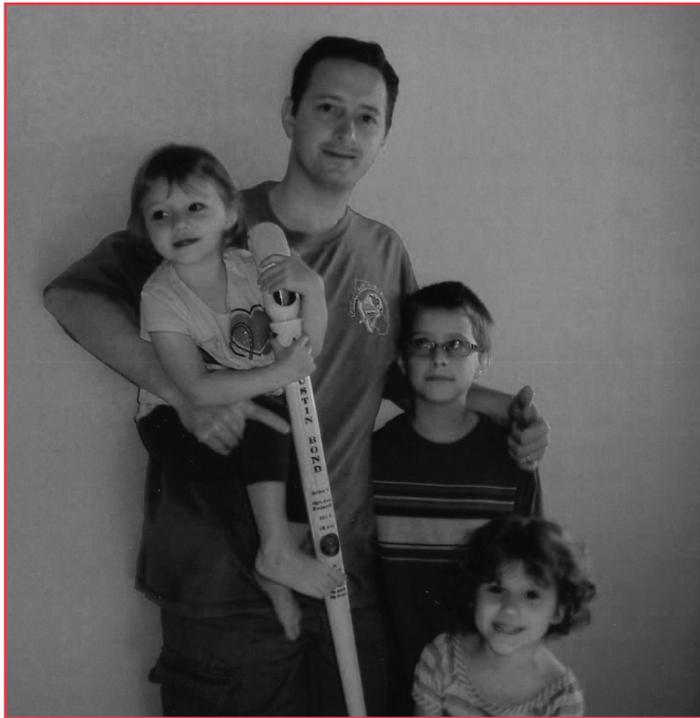
"I didn't know what I was going to do," Justin says. "My vehicle was in the shop and I had no way to pay for it."

A fellow veteran suggested Justin call the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes.

"I talked with the Coalition and they made me feel very comfortable," he remembers. "The Coalition had the mechanic's shop fax over an itemized bill, and they took care of it.

"The Coalition to Salute America's Heroes had an immediate impact. You need it now; they are there now. I'm just grateful for good organizations like that.

"It makes me proud to be an American. It makes me proud to fight for this country."



Retired Army Sgt. Justin Bond, seen here with his son Jared and daughters Jennifer and Makayla, was shot through both knees while on patrol near Fallujah, Iraq. After 33 surgeries, doctors were forced to amputate his left leg. When he had nowhere else to turn to get his car fixed, Coalition donors came to the rescue.

Policy on using troops' names and photos

Readers of "The Road to Recovery Report" may wonder why some service members are identified by their full names and in other cases only first names and last initials are used. The reason is that the U.S. Department of Defense has asked the Coalition to refrain from using the full names of active military personnel, and we are complying with that request by using only their last name initial, when applicable. In the case of retired service members, in order to protect their privacy, the Coalition uses their full names and/or photos only with their permission.

