

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY REPORT

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

Wounded troops facing utility cutoffs, evictions as freezing weather arrives



For the sixth Christmas Season in a row, Coalition donors generously reached into their own pockets to make sure hundreds of good girls and boys received toys on Christmas morning, even though their disabled parents couldn't afford it.

severe leg injury, Sgt. Eric W. of Centerville, Ohio contacted the Coalition needing emergency aid just to buy groceries.

Sgt. Raymond B. contacted the Coalition from his Palm Coast, Florida home hoping to keep his lights on, his car running and to eat for the rest of the month.

With an empty pantry and overdue rent, Staff Sgt. Kevin S. of Sackets Harbor, New York reached out to the Coalition hoping for some

help with his financial crisis.

Because Specialist Thomas B. of Jacksonville, Florida lost a leg while serving in Iraq, he was forced to turn to the Coalition for emergency help with a mountain of overdue utility and grocery bills.

When Sgt. Todd B.'s car broke down, he lacked the money to get it fixed. So he called the Coalition for help getting him back on the road.

With temperatures dipping, Sgt. Sean M. of Colorado Springs, Colorado found himself unable to make his latest utility payment and his only hope was to turn to the Coalition.

And Marine Lance Cpl. Joel K., is learning to live without the foot he lost on the battlefields in Iraq. But he can't survive without paying his rent and utility bills, and contacted the Coalition for help.

"The problem is we just can't keep up with the flood of emergency requests from severely wounded troops and their families," Sotomayor says. "So we are counting on our faithful supporters to send another gift to bring them in from the cold, or better yet, to make sure they never get thrown out into the cold in the first place." ■



Rory Dunn was blinded in one eye and suffered brain damage when his vehicle was bombed in Iraq. Many disabled troops like Rory are facing evictions or utility cutoffs in the freezing winter weather, and your gift can help.

This year Santa desperately needed the help, because by early November it became clear the 2010 Emergency Secret Santa Project was falling short. So the Coalition rushed out an emergency mailing from Major General John K. Singlaub, U.S. Army (Ret.) and national spokesman Jorge DeLeon alerting donors to the problem.

Due to an outpouring of last-minute financial support, Coalition staffers were able to send out \$500 Christmas gift cards just in time to enable troops seriously injured in Afghanistan or Iraq to provide Christmas gifts for their children.

But as the Christmas Season draws to a close, winter is just beginning. And with heating and electric bills rising, the number of emergency requests is rising as well from severely injured troops facing utility cutoffs, evictions and other financial crises.

"Between higher energy costs, a tough job market and too little in benefits, the severely wounded troops and their families I talk to are in a tougher spot than ever," says Coalition case manager Neida Sotomayor.

"We have been flooded with calls from wounded servicemen and women who desperately need help now that the winter weather has set in."

A few examples:

After returning from Afghanistan with a

Providing
Emergency Aid
to Troops Severely
Wounded in
Afghanistan or Iraq

Key Programs:

Emergency
Financial Aid

Family Support
Network

Career Network

Road to Recovery
Conference & Tribute

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Providing Emergency Aid to Troops Severely Wounded in Afghanistan or Iraq

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By the numbers: Your generosity at work



Here's a brief sampling of severely wounded troops who have been helped by your generous donations to the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes. These U.S. servicemen and women have fallen into desperate circumstances and need more assistance than we've been able to provide thus far.

- Air Force Sgt. Hillary F. of San Antonio, Texas contacted the Coalition needing \$1,590 for back rent and overdue car and car insurance payments.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$1,590.00**
- An autoimmune disease contracted while serving in Iraq crippled the ability of Air Force Cpt. Shelia N. to keep up on her bills. She needed \$4,066.35 for overdue mortgage and utility payments.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$4,066.35**
- Marine Sgt. Ronnie T. of Orlando, Florida needed \$613.11 to keep the electricity and water turned on in his home.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$613.11**
- Unpaid medical bills totaling \$590.15 forced Army Sgt. Carmen S. of Colorado Springs, Colorado to contact the Coalition for help.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$590.15**
- Wounded Afghanistan veteran Gene E. of Indianola, Iowa faced \$1,083.68 in overdue rent when he contacted the Coalition.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$1,083.68**
- A traumatic brain injury suffered while serving in Iraq left Army Ssg. Deron S. of Lafayette, Louisiana \$4,700 behind on his mortgage.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$4,700.00**
- Cpl. Keith H. of Mt. Juliet, Tennessee has brain damage as a result of his service in Iraq. He needed \$3,886.27 for overdue rent and utility payments.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$3,886.27**
- Marine LCpl. Michael C. of Rockaway Beach, New Jersey was \$3,000 behind on his rent payments and faced losing his home.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$3,000.00**
- Cpl. Miguel D., a Marine veteran from Wilmington, North Carolina faced eviction unless he could make \$4,192.76 in overdue rent payments.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$4,192.76**
- Army Pfc. John M. of Fullerton, California was on the verge of eviction and didn't even have enough to buy groceries when he called the Coalition. He needed \$4,625 to get caught up.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$4,625.00**
- A spinal injury suffered while serving in Iraq left Spc. Larry B. of Cheyenne, Wyoming needing \$750 to cover a missed rent payment.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$750.00**
- Marine LCpl. Joel K. of Greenfield, Iowa lost his leg while serving in Iraq. He needed a total of \$1776.66 to pay overdue utility and car payments and pay for groceries.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$1,776.66**
- Hunger drove Cpl. Dustin B. of Grants Pass, Oregon to contact the Coalition and request \$1,300 for rent and groceries to see him through.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$1,300.00**
- Spc. Michael B. of Cheyenne, Wyoming was facing foreclosure unless he could come up with \$3,356.96 right away.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$3,356.96**
- Sgt. Howard P. of Killeen, Texas returned from service in Afghanistan with a serious injury and found himself \$1,363.63 behind on numerous bills.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$1,363.63**
- When he had nothing left to buy food, the Coalition rushed a \$500 gift card to severely wounded Iraq veteran Roy S. of Brownsburg, Indiana.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$500.00**
- Marine Cpl. Aaron K. of Summerville, South Carolina faced eviction from his home unless he came up with \$1,500.
▶ **Coalition Paid: \$1,500.00**



MAKING A DIFFERENCE



A Merry Christmas for severely wounded GIs and their families



Coalition donors provide \$500 gift cards so children of wounded troops can get presents from Santa



Former medic Tim Bredberg couldn't resume his career as a cabinet designer and builder after suffering severe wounds from a mortar attack in Iraq. The Coalition provided Tim and his family with a \$500 gift card so they could enjoy a happy holiday season.



Army Sgt. Steven H. has been having trouble meeting all his bills since his injury because his wife has been unable to work. Coalition donors helped Steven and his family with emergency aid and also gave them a \$500 gift card for Christmas.



Many children of severely wounded troops will not get a visit from Santa this Christmas. Almost half of spouses of severely wounded troops have to quit their jobs to take care of their crippled spouse. This leaves almost nothing for their children to celebrate at Christmas.



A painful back injury from a roadside bomb made life difficult for Travis F. He and his seven children would be homeless if it weren't for Coalition donors. "They have had to miss three Christmases since I returned home," says Travis.

This assistance has assured that my family will have a good Christmas.
— Alvin G., Ekron, Kentucky



IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Thank you letters from our severely wounded troops



The Coalition has been “a ray of hope in the darkness and their great job will never be forgotten.”

I've struggled for several years trying to rehabilitate myself so I could have a normal life but things never got better for me. I lost my job and have been unemployed since February 2008. I was about to be evicted, utilities were about to be disconnected, and I was days away from losing my vehicle. I prayed and prayed until I found myself searching the Internet and came across the website for the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes. Without hesitation, they immediately stepped in and provided the assistance I needed. I had given up, lost all hope within our society but have since regained a little trust back because of organizations like CSAH. I am so thankful that there are organizations like the Coalition that gives veterans like myself a little relief from financial hardships.

— *Brenda M.
Columbia, South Carolina*

It means a great deal for any help from people who care about the sacrifices we have made for the U.S. and how much families have to go through every time we are deployed. Thank you so much CSAH for your support for my family and myself. Over there we were on our mission. It is nice to know someone is on a mission for us.

— *Benjamin F.
Middleburg, Florida*

The assistance I received has helped to keep spirits alive during these uncertain times. CSAH has been a ray of hope in the darkness and their GREAT job will never be forgotten. They truly played a large part to make my goals and aspirations possible. God Bless.

— *Matthew R. Pennington
Springtown, Texas*

I wanted to say thanks for helping me make my house payment. It was a struggle for some time but things are much better today. I am able to work full time now. GOD BLESS YOU!

— *Randall A. Hall
Twin Fall, Idaho*

The Coalition to Salute America's Heroes is a blessing. The assistance I received helped me with my debts and hardships. I will now be able to go get my son and care for him. This shows me that there are people out there that appreciate my dedication to our country. Ya'll have been a great help and have uplifted my spirits so much. It has all meant a great deal to me and I feel very blessed.

— *Chad Williams
Alexandria, Louisiana*

More creative ways you can help our troops severely wounded in Afghanistan or Iraq

Volunteer at a Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center near you. Your skilled hands and warm heart are needed by our patients to heal, progress and be comfortable. Hospital employees will also be grateful for your assistance and will pay careful attention to finding tasks to match your skills and abilities.

Other ways to volunteer include: Volunteering your time as a caregiver for a few hours to give the spouse of a severely disabled servicemember a much-needed break; offering to run errands for a wounded soldier or his/her spouse; or mentoring or tutoring wounded troops who need to develop new skills for job training.

Take a wounded serviceman or woman out to a movie, sporting event or other activity. You can help a seriously injured servicemember forget about their pain for awhile, and perhaps even help in their mental and emotional recovery, by getting them out of their home or hospital for an afternoon or evening.

