

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY REPORT

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

Wounded troops threatened by budget shortfall as requests for emergency financial aid pour in



A sudden surge in emergency financial aid requests is depleting funds needed to help severely wounded servicemen and women who are facing dire financial crises.

During the first week of June, Major General John K. Singlaub, U.S. Army (Retired), alerted Coalition supporters about this unexpected budget shortfall that has left Coalition staffers unable to send out emergency financial aid as quickly as necessary.

Singlaub cited a 21 percent increase in the number of emergency requests coming in from severely wounded troops for the first three months of this year as compared to the same three months of last year.

"We are being asked to rescue 121 service members this year for every 100 we rescued last year. And quite frankly, we simply don't have the money at this time to help the additional troops," he wrote.

This sudden surge in emergency requests is most likely a result of the rising cost of groceries and gasoline hitting our severely wounded troops especially hard.

Since disabled servicemen and women are forced to wait an average of six months for their first government disability check to arrive after being released from the hospital and discharged from the service, what little they have is quickly eaten up by rapidly rising gas and food prices, leaving them vulnerable to utility shutoffs, eviction notices and other financial disasters.

Making matters worse is the fact that many disabled troops' spouses who lost their jobs in the recession have yet to find new ones.

Singlaub's letter to supporters included a personal letter from Tee Jay Simmons, a

seriously injured serviceman who says he was "on the brink of homelessness."

Tee Jay was on the flight deck of an aircraft carrier when he fell while preparing an F-18 for a mission. Fortunately, a safety net saved him from crashing into the ocean.

Today, nearly five years later, Simmons still says he deals with "excruciating pain" whenever he does common household tasks and needs help simply putting on his socks.

Needless to say, the Simmons family has already cut out all but the necessities and is still behind on rent and utilities.

"When I was wounded and lost income, it affected the family tremendously," he wrote. Simmons said his family was "on the brink of homelessness" before being rescued, and called the Coalition's assistance "lifesaving."

Nearly every day, severely wounded troops return from Afghanistan or Iraq to a sharply changed world, Singlaub noted.

And many will have to spend their lives in a wheelchair or learn to cope with the loss of a limb, blindness, severe burns, PTSD, a traumatic brain injury or other debilitating wounds.

For many of these soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, Coalition donors have been their last hope to keep a roof over their heads or feed their families.

Unfortunately, the Coalition's budget shortfall could force the organization to start turning away desperate military families pleading for emergency financial aid – families who "have suffered enough already," Singlaub said. ■



Tee Jay Simmons was "on the brink of homelessness" after sustaining an injury while serving on an aircraft carrier. Today he still suffers from excruciating pain. But at least generous donations from Coalition supporters prevented him from losing his home.

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 and Tribute

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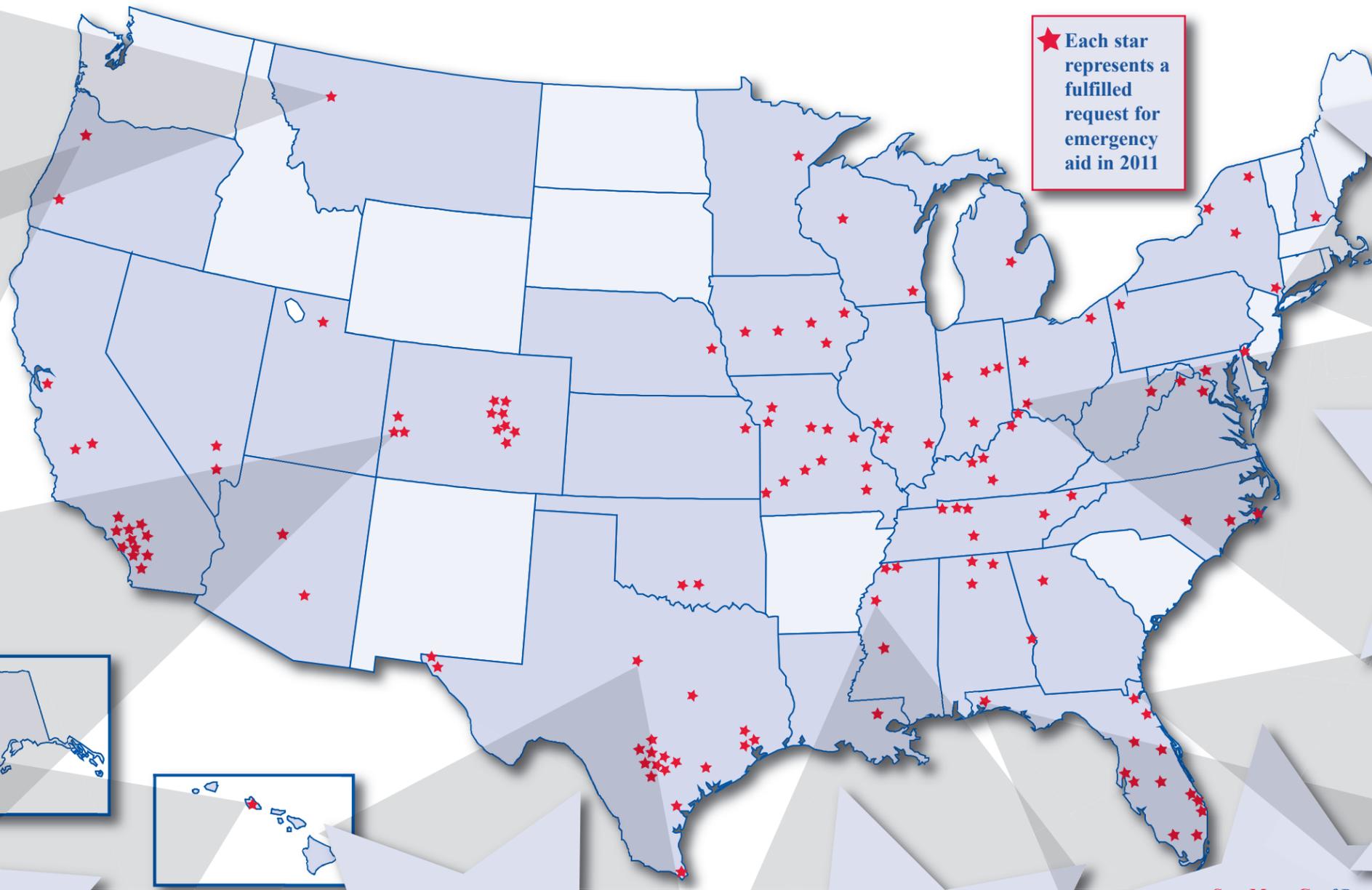
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Coalition Donors Rush Emergency Aid All Across the Country

Here's a small sample of the wounded heroes Coalition donors are helping in 2011 with emergency financial aid



★ Each star represents a fulfilled request for emergency aid in 2011

Air Force Sgt. Brian H. of Fairfield, Montana served in both Iraq and Afghanistan. His injuries left him needing \$1,973.11 to catch up on his mortgage, car and utility payments, and put food in his pantry.

Ssg. Kenneth P. of Yonkers, New York suffered a traumatic brain injury while serving in Iraq. He was \$2,000 behind on rent.

Marine Cpl. Shaun M. of Oregon City, Oregon is recovering from a traumatic brain injury suffered while serving in Iraq. He needed \$1,565.69 for rent, utilities and food.

Cpt. Mark J. of Harrison, Ohio returned from service in Iraq with a serious injury. He found it difficult to keep up with rising food prices and needed \$500 to fill his pantry.

Sgt. Aaron W. of Grand Junction, Colorado was severely injured while serving in Iraq. He needed \$2,625 for a deposit and first month's rent on a new place to live.

Sgt. Nathaniel H. was moving to Jacksonville, Florida and didn't have the \$2,000 necessary to complete the move.

Spc. Jeffery L. of Honolulu, Hawaii needed \$2,150 so he could use his vehicle to get treatment for serious injuries suffered while serving in Iraq.

Spc. Timothy S. of Rhome, Texas struggles with the aftereffects of a serious brain injury suffered while serving in Iraq. He needed \$1,023.24 to pay an overdue electric bill and put food on his table.

Sgt. James J. of Clarksdale, Mississippi needed \$2,680.49 to keep his mortgage current and for car payments and groceries.

Spc. Mary C. of Pensacola, Florida couldn't keep up with rising food and utility bills. She needed \$3,896.96 for food and to get caught up with her utilities and rent.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Thank you letters from our severely wounded troops



“Without your help, we’d still be cold and tired.”

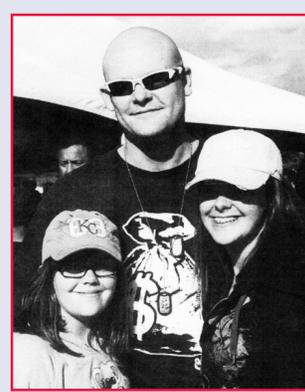
My children and I could not stay in our home when a broken well pump left us without water, and our electricity was turned off when I had to spend our money getting to and from the doctor for my eldest son’s knee surgery. Thanks to the Coalition, my well pump was repaired and the electricity turned back on, allowing us to return home – OUR HOME! We are returning to our normal lives again and I almost feel like the provider I once was. My children are back in their own beds. All said, my family is regaining our life back thanks to this amazing organization.

— *Sgt. Steve Chaddock, U.S. Army (Retired), Hope Mills, North Carolina*

We didn’t have heat for a few months this winter and had to use space heaters and electric blankets. [Coalition donors] stepped in and covered the installation costs for a new furnace. I can’t describe how you helped my family by giving us a safe, warm home. Without your help, we’d still be cold and tired. Thank you doesn’t seem to even begin to cover it! We are still struggling and trying to get on track, but we can do it from a warm house now. God Bless You All!

— *Ssg. Paul Cornett, U.S. Army (Retired), Clayton, Ohio*

The assistance I received from the Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes has meant a great deal to my wife and me. I don’t have the words to explain how much it has meant. It has helped us keep a place to live and saved my truck for a few more months. There are still



When retired Army Sgt. Aaron Winningham and his family decided to move in order to help him recover, they couldn’t afford many of the moving expenses. Coalition donors stepped in and now the family is back on track.

a lot of challenges my wife and I face, but I just thank God there are people out there that still care. Ya’ll have meant the world to my wife and me. I can’t ever thank ya’ll enough. We are forever grateful. God Bless.

— *Spc. Larry Bostick, U.S. Army (Retired), Cheyenne, Wyoming*

Words are not enough to express how truly blessed we are. We are really stressed out thinking about what our future and life will be. But the Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes helped a lot of families in need (including us). Thank you very, very much. Thank you for making our life easier. We are so grateful for the help you have given us.

— *Ssg. Reginald Toney, U.S. Army (Retired), San Antonio, Texas*

We purchased our first home in October in an effort to improve Aaron’s environment and get him out of the city. Since our move, we really struggled with paying moving expenses and double bills during the transition. Now we are caught up and can maintain our expenses. We do not live with credit cards or looming debt – thankfully. We just needed that little help to get back on track. It’s nice to know there are still amazing organizations like CSAH that are here for our heroes. It makes them feel as though they are not forgotten. We will be forever in debt to you.

— *Joy Winningham (wife of Aaron), Kearney, Missouri*

Thank You and Get Well Card Program

The Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes’ innovative Thank You and Get Well Card Program was created as a way for Americans to show their patriotic support firsthand to servicemen and women who have suffered serious injuries in Afghanistan or Iraq.

Tens of thousands of THANK YOU and GET WELL cards from Coalition supporters have been signed and handed out to severely wounded soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines (and other military veterans) all across the country. These cards serve as an important reminder to these men and women that the American people have not forgotten their sacrifices and truly appreciate everything they have given to defend our country.

