

# The Road to Recovery Report

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

Volume 50 ★ February 2015

*Providing Emergency Aid  
to Troops Severely Disabled  
in the War on Terror*



“The Coalition stepped in and helped us when we needed them the most. They covered the gap for us financially and kept the lights on, and a roof over our head, and food in our stomachs. That, to me, is an incredible gesture of thanks.”

— Torrey Shannon, wife of a disabled veteran

## Celebrating TEN YEARS of changing heroes' lives

2014 was an exciting year for the Coalition as we celebrated our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of helping severely disabled war on terror veterans recover and rebuild.

And it's *your generous support* that makes it all possible. So thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Whether you've been a friend of the Coalition for one year or for ten, *together* we are changing veterans' lives.

Inside your special 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary newsletter you'll find updates on exciting Coalition programs and events – and a very special look back at some of the heroes we've helped over the past 10 years.

I hope you're excited and encouraged to see how your faithful support, patriotic spirit, and generous giving are making a difference every day in the lives of American heroes.

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# Letter from President David Walker

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Dear Friend of Our Wounded Heroes,

2014 marked an important milestone for the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes: The 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our unique mission to provide emergency financial aid to troops severely wounded in the war on terror.

I say "unique" because the Coalition remains the leading organization dedicated to providing emergency financial aid to heroes struggling and suffering to make ends meet after their lives were shattered by war.

While the face of the war on terror has changed vastly over the past ten years, one thing that hasn't changed is the reason we are here.

A steady stream of wounded veterans returning home from war continues – many missing arms and legs, some badly burned, and others suffering from traumatic brain injuries or post-traumatic stress disorder. And heroes who have been home for months or even years continue battling the overwhelming challenges of their injuries.

It is truly amazing how medical teams in combat zones save wounded warriors who would have died in earlier wars – but it also means our military men and women are returning with physical and mental scars they will be a long time overcoming.

Attending to their immediate needs is the Coalition's primary mission. There is always a gap of months or years between a wounded warrior's return home and the payment of benefits. For ten years now the Coalition has been stepping in to help thousands of them with emergency checks to cover their urgent, immediate needs.

It is our honor to serve these American heroes – side-by-side with our faithful friends and supporters.

And this anniversary is the perfect time to thank *you* – because without you, the past ten years of helping these suffering heroes would not have been possible.

Thank you for your faithful support.

Thank you for your unwavering generosity.

Thank you for your patriotism.

I'm honored to count on you as a friend and have you by my side as we move forward into a new year – a new decade for the Coalition – and new opportunities to salute America's heroes.

With gratitude,

David Walker  
President & CEO





## The practical ways your gifts change lives

### Your gift provides Easter & other holiday meals to veteran families

**C**oalition's Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas Meals Projects provide thousands of severely wounded troops with \$60 each so their families – who have sacrificed so much – can enjoy a special dinner during the holidays.

As a faithful Coalition supporter, you know our disabled troops and veterans wait an average of 10 months (and sometimes longer) for their first

government disability check. Often they're so badly injured their spouses are forced to quit their jobs to take care of them – and their family is suddenly without income.

These families struggle to put any food on the table – let alone a special holiday dinner with all the trimmings. These special meals projects are just another way Coalition donors' gifts go to work to show our severely disabled

veterans that we remember them and appreciate their sacrifices.

We completed successful Thanksgiving and Christmas Meals Projects this past holiday season, thanks to the generous giving of Coalition donors. And we're just kicking off our 2015 Easter Meals Project, so look for important updates and opportunities to help coming to your mailbox soon!

### Your gift saves disabled veterans from homelessness and hunger

**T**he Emergency Financial Aid Program is at the heart of our mission to provide direct assistance – with your generous help – to our veterans severely wounded in the war on terror.

A sluggish bureaucracy has our disabled troops and veterans waiting an average of 10 months (and sometimes longer) for their first government disability check. But

for a disabled hero who is unable to work, that wait spells disaster for their family – especially when their spouse often has to leave their job to become a full-time caregiver for their loved one.

When you donate to the Emergency Financial Aid Program, your gift goes to work quickly to help a disabled veteran keep a roof over his family's head, food on the

table, or a car in the driveway. Sometimes he will use it for medical bills; sometimes she will use it to pay overdue utility bills.

But no matter what the emergency, you can rest assured that your gift is drastically changing the life of a wounded hero who might otherwise go homeless, hungry, or suffer some other frightening hardship.

### Your gift gives Christmas presents to struggling veterans' families

**T**he Coalition's Secret Santa Project provides \$500 Christmas gift checks to our troops who have been maimed, burned, blinded, or suffered other severe injuries in Afghanistan or Iraq so they can give their families a few Christmas presents. In fact, we concluded another successful Secret Santa Project about a month ago!

The severely disabled troops and veterans your Coalition gifts reach are in financial dire straits – they are struggling to keep their home, pay the electric bill, and put food on the table.

They certainly don't have money for extras like Christmas gifts.

That's why we created the Secret Santa Project. The Coalition – and our generous donors, like you – couldn't stand the thought of children being heartbroken on Christmas morning by getting nothing from Santa because their wounded parent couldn't afford it.

Each year we receive letters from grateful veterans overwhelmed by the generosity of Coalition donors. Look for some of those heartwarming letters on the back page of an upcoming newsletter.



**Dan and Torrey Shannon at the Road to Recovery Conference. Dan was disabled in Iraq after receiving an AK-47 round to the head.**



**Y**our Coalition is committed to doing all we can to change the lives of our nation’s severely disabled war on terror veterans. To further that mission we’re constantly working to raise awareness about the issues they face and reaching out to help them in the community.

## Coalition proudly supports Warrior Beach Week hosted by Operation SEAs the Day

**F**rom September 2-7, Bethany Beach, Delaware welcomed 35 soldiers and their immediate families for a well-deserved week of rest and relaxation. The families stayed in homes/condos donated to them by local homeowners and provided the resources for a stress-free vacation.



## Lions Club honors Coalition, Rob Jones Journey

**O**n September 27 the Lovettsville, Virginia Lions Club & Protective Game Association presented the Coalition with a check for \$2,300 in honor of our work and in recognition of the Rob Jones Journey. On hand for the event were (left to right) Board Member Bruce Kelly, President David Walker, and Mr. and Mrs. Jones, Rob’s parents. A sincere THANK YOU to the Lovettsville Lions Club and Lovettsville Protective Game Association for their support!



## Coalition CEO David Walker invited to address senior IRS leadership team

**T**he turnout was fantastic and we were honored that the Commissioner of the IRS, John Koskinen, took time away from his extremely busy schedule to attend and listen to David. With Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) season underway, this was a great opportunity for the Coalition to raise awareness and gain CFC contributions from IRS employees that we can use to support the severely disabled veterans we serve!

#12523





## An easy and exciting way to support the Coalition

Attention Amazon.com customers: Please consider shopping Amazon Smile. When you use Amazon Smile, you get the same great products, prices and service – and Amazon donates 0.5% of your qualified purchases to the Coalition. Just visit [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com), and select the Coalition as your charity of choice.



## Coalition leadership attends annual OSS Society

### William J. Donovan Award ceremony

David Walker (right) and Col. Martin Badegian (left) with Major General John Singlaub (center). The OSS Society presents the William J. Donovan Award to an individual who has rendered distinguished service to the United States of America.



## Coalition represented at the 33rd Annual Atlanta Veterans Day Parade

Director of Veterans Services Jil Hinds (CSAH Field Representative, Southeast) pictured with Kevin L. Miller President of the Georgia Veterans Day Parade Association of Atlanta, Inc. The event marked a beautiful day of honoring our nation's heroes!



## Award Ceremony and Resource Exposition

Jil Hinds also represented the Coalition at the 13th annual DeKalb County Veterans Day Award Ceremony and Resource Exposition. This year's theme was "We are United," featuring remarks from special guest speaker James Blaylock, President of the Military Order of the Purple Heart Foundation and Ret. Major General Marcelite J. Harris, first African American female general of the United States Air Force.



## Coalition hosts 8<sup>th</sup> Road to Recovery Conference

Thanks to your generosity, our eighth Road to Recovery Conference – held this year in sunny Coronado, California – was a rousing success.

“This conference is giving me tools for me to move forward in my life,” said disabled veteran Dennis Cabanting.

“The Road to Recovery is the first event or interaction I’ve had with [the Coalition],” said veteran Chris Miller. “I can tell that everything is done with the highest quality and the highest amount of care – not just for the wounded veteran but for the family. I haven’t seen any other organization that brings family together – they are so focused on the family.”

“I am rated as housebound by the VA,” veteran Dan Shannon told us. “I don’t leave my house unless I have to. The Coalition and the Road to Recovery Conference is one of the few reasons I will leave my house. It is actually a rare opportunity for our children to have a vacation of any kind with me included in it and I do that as my way of trying to say thank you to the CSAH for everything that they’ve done for us.”

Those words are grateful messages from disabled veterans to you, our faithful supporters. Because these heroes know the reason they’re able to attend this conference is the generous giving of friends like you.

At the Road to Recovery Conference, wounded veterans and their families spent four days attending sessions on everything from PTSD to VA benefits, attending a job fair, hearing inspirational speakers, and even spending some time at Sea World.

At breakfast one morning, Coalition friend and retired Army Golden Parachutist Dana Bowman parachuted onto the hotel’s patio. Another highlight of the event was a book signing by Shilo Harris, himself a disabled veteran. Harris’s book *Steel Will* describes the 2007 Iraq bomb blast that upended his Humvee and his life.

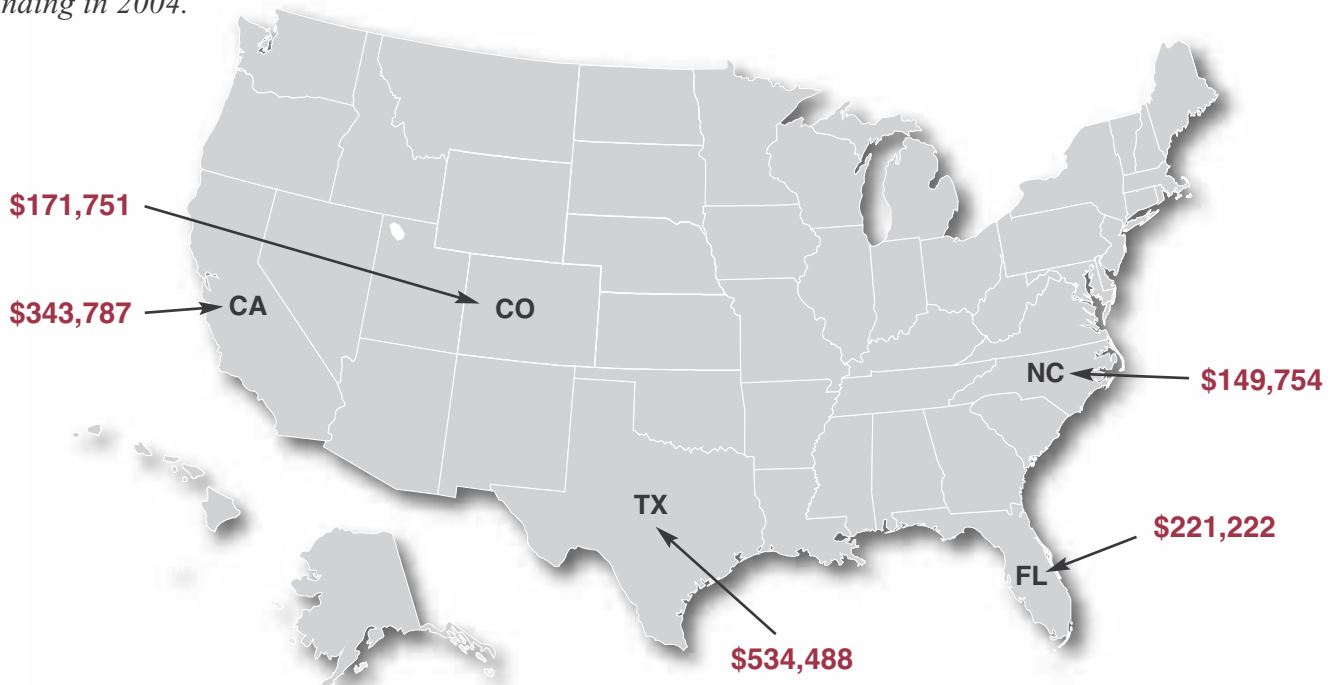
And each family in attendance received a special gift – a \$500 check to spend as they please. Veterans said they would use the money to help with everything from everyday needs to making Christmas a little brighter for their children.





## 2004-2014: 10 years of changing lives ... across the United States!

In your supporter-exclusive Road to Recovery Report newsletter, we regularly share “By the Numbers” reports – the names, needs, and emergency financial aid amounts given to specific heroes we’ve helped recently. In this 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition we’re sharing a very special “By the Numbers” – a look at the emergency aid given to disabled veterans across the United States. The numbers below represent 2011-2014 assistance given to disabled veterans through just one of our many programs – Emergency Financial Aid Program – and we’ve helped heroes with millions more aid through other support programs since our founding in 2004.



### ★★★ By the Numbers Across the Country ★★★

Together we’ve helped disabled war on terror veterans in all 50 states! See how much financial aid has gone to heroes in *your* state since 2011. (States in red represent the 10 states where we’ve been able to help the most disabled veterans.)

AK	\$5,958	ID	\$8,372	MT	\$6,934	RI	\$5,240
AL	\$71,903	IL	\$72,993	NE	\$30,859	SC	\$37,872
AR	\$23,394	IN	\$74,069	NV	\$34,678	SD	\$5,871
AZ	\$67,931	KS	\$62,541	NH	\$15,040	TN	\$122,619
CA	\$343,787	KY	\$117,056	NJ	\$66,975	TX	\$534,488
CO	\$171,751	LA	\$26,024	NM	\$29,548	UT	\$8,187
CT	\$29,238	ME	\$17,176	NY	\$127,308	VA	\$130,786
DC	\$8,916	MD	\$36,938	NC	\$149,754	VT	\$2,300
DE	\$2,552	MA	\$29,701	ND	\$5,000	WA	\$42,273
FL	\$221,222	MI	\$48,001	OH	\$69,817	WV	\$18,735
GA	\$142,580	MN	\$15,803	OK	\$51,898	WI	\$41,893
HI	\$5,829	MS	\$38,065	OR	\$54,941	WY	\$4,460
IA	\$64,010	MO	\$96,726	PA	\$62,459		



# 2004-2014: 10 years of changing lives

In 2004 the Coalition was founded with a very special mission: To help the disabled heroes of the war on terror rebuild their lives forever changed by war. We've been true to that mission for ten years now – but it's only been possible because of the generous and patriotic friends like you who have worked, given and prayed to support our disabled troops. So the stories below are your stories as well as ours. We hope you enjoy this brief look back at the difference we've made together ... and that you're so proud of everything we've accomplished.

## 10 years of making a one-of-a-kind difference

The veterans we help *know* the Coalition is different from any other veterans' organization.

Marjorie Pennington, the wife of a disabled veteran who lost his leg and suffers from severe PTSD after serving in Iraq, wrote:



*"There are a lot of organizations that help with different aspects, but when it comes to emergency financial assistance, the Coalition is who you need to go to."*

Rebecca Kempton, a National Guard soldier who injured her back and neck and suffers from PTSD after serving in Iraq, told us:



*"The biggest key difference is how family oriented the Coalition is. I've never had an opportunity out of all the stuff I've done through other veterans organizations to take my son somewhere with me. For him to get this opportunity and meet other kids just like him – they're giving me that peace."*

*For him to get this opportunity and meet other kids just like him – they're giving me that peace."*

## By the numbers: 10 years of helping veterans rebuild

- ★ The Coalition has provided more than 30 million in financial aid and other support services to our wounded veterans since our inception.
- ★ *More than 30,000* separate emergency aid payments, grants and holiday gift checks
- ★ 8 Road to Recovery Conferences
- ★ 6,508 Secret Santa checks totaling \$3,254,000
- ★ 13,887 Thanksgiving meals gift checks distributed over the past six years totaling \$833,220.
- ★ In 2013 alone, 580,000 Thank You & Get Well cards by grateful Americans and distributed to disabled heroes.
- ★ Over 100 wounded veterans or primary caregivers have been employed in the Heroes Thanking Heroes program since its inception in 2006.



*10 years of doing good:  
Your giving in action*

*"We were denied food stamps because they thought we were getting a check from the Army, but we weren't. If it weren't for the Coalition, we'd probably have been in the streets."*

— Sgt. Jason Brunson, U.S. Army (Ret.)

*"What the Coalition did for me I don't think I could ever repay. They saved my life."*

— Sgt. Matthew Pennington, U.S. Army (Ret.)

*"We were literally four days away from losing our house completely. The Coalition stepped in and was able to stop that from happening. It was such a relief."*

— Tony C., National Guard

*"[The Coalition was] the light at the end of the tunnel for me. You made me feel like a person, not a burden."*

— Tim W.

*"Everything has changed. Nothing is normal like it used to be before. Financially it's really challenging – all these problems that we have to face through basically the rest of our lives. There was a point in time that we couldn't afford our house payment, our car payments, electricity bill, and that was when the Coalition helped us."*

— Pablo Jimenez Heredia, U.S. Army (Ret.)

*"The Coalition has been family. I felt lost in a sea of people who didn't have any idea who I was. But the people with the Coalition are warriors just like me. They're the same. They look at me the same as I look at them. And that's more than I've had even with my own family."*

— Pvt. Andrew Smith, USMC (Ret.)

*"We were slowly sinking, we were barely treading water. Then we got hooked up with the Coalition. The Coalition was a godsend."*

— Spc. Charles Stewart, U.S. Army (Ret.)





## Invisible Wounds: The Deadly Scars of PTSD

“The PTSD has greatly impacted every aspect of our marriage – our family – our kids. [He copes by] blocking things off – that’s what the military has taught him.”

“I’ve wrestled with suicide since 2008.”

“[My husband’s PTSD] is mostly anger, inability to sleep, has some anxiety with crowds ... sadness and trauma from not being able to complete his mission.”

“PTSD is why my marriage is no longer. The anger and the tension destroyed the marriage – and I just see the impact that’s had on my children.”

While most of the disabled veterans whose stories we share with you suffer from a crippling physical disability, nearly every hero we talk to suffers from PTSD that makes their lives unstable at best and unbearable at worst.

There are many reasons PTSD is a serious and growing problem among our War on Terror veterans. (On the next page you can read Coalition President David Walker’s take on one important reason.) The numbers are truly staggering:

- Of the 2.3 million American veterans of the Iraq and

Afghanistan wars, studies show *at least 20%* (over 460,000) suffer from PTSD and/or depression

- An estimated 50% of those with PTSD don’t seek treatment.
- And 50% of those with PTSD who *do* seek help receive only “minimally adequate” treatment.

The symptoms of PTSD – including reliving the event through nightmares and flashbacks, avoiding crowds or other scenarios that feel dangerous, negative changes in beliefs and feelings, even towards loved ones, and constantly feeling “keyed up” or jittery – can wreak havoc in the lives of veterans and their families.

The symptoms of PTSD prevent many veterans from holding down jobs once they’re out of the military, and they often need constant care which prevents their spouses from working as well.

Your continued generosity allows us to help these struggling heroes focus on *surviving* and *healing* without having to worry about making sure their family doesn’t lose the roof over their head and can keep food on the table and clothes on their backs.

## The Faces of PTSD...





## PTSD and Our Military: A “desperate fight against fanaticism”

*The Coalition is at the forefront of the issues facing our modern warriors. We have seen firsthand how PTSD shatters lives and creates an ongoing battle in the bodies and minds of our disabled heroes and their families. Below is an excerpt of a special Veterans’ Day editorial written by Coalition President David Walker and appearing in The Washington Times.*

“We expect our soldiers to be brave but assume they hope and pray to survive so they can return home to their loved ones. We are at a loss to understand the mentality of men who are actually eager to sacrifice their lives on the battlefield.

But that is what we are up against again today in our seemingly endless struggle against Islamic fanatics in the Middle East and elsewhere ... On some days in the Middle East, suicide bombers stroll into public places and wreak fearful carnage, and it may eventually be happening here if we are not vigilant.

**Against that prospect, we have a thin khaki line of brave American men and women who risk their lives daily to protect our country.** Like those dauntless sailors and airmen on the U.S.S. Bunker Hill, they put themselves in harm’s way so we can live normal lives secure in our homes and protective of our cherished freedoms. **Many of these heroes do not come home alive, and many others come maimed physically and psychologically.**

Our military people today are no less brave and committed than the heroes of WWII, but they are fewer in number. We rely on a volunteer force that is by historical standards quite small. Less than 1 percent of our population is actively engaged in its defense. Millions of Americans whose lives and security depends on this small

group cannot name one individual relative or friend in active service. I have heard senior officers say the nation is not at war; the Army is at war. But our nation truly is at war and every day it comes closer to our shores.

If we lack the political will to expand our military forces with some form of compulsory service, **it is all the more imperative that we become more active on behalf of the tiny minority that volunteers to serve – and especially on behalf of those who pay the price. Unfortunately, our government is not nearly as efficient supporting our wounded warriors as it is providing**

**them with deadly weapons.** The Veterans Administration has new leadership today, but the overall organization is dysfunctional and in any event lacks the resources it needs to provide these deserving (mostly young) people with the assistance they need and deserve.

I am hopeful that growing recognition of the deep-seated problems at the VA will lead to substantive reforms and more resources. Until that day, groups such as

mine work to fill the void, providing direct financial support to wounded veterans awaiting adjudication of their claims, providing living quarters for homeless veterans, and managing a variety of programs to help victims of post-traumatic stress disorder resume productive lives in society.

There is a growing awareness among our citizens of the tremendous burden borne by our tiny defense forces and the fearsome price they pay defending our values and way of life. This Veterans Day affords us an excellent opportunity to recognize their sacrifice and commit to helping those who have borne the heat of the battle on behalf of the great majority of us.”





## America’s female veterans face unique challenges – your help is urgently needed

The Coalition is committed to supporting America’s female veterans – the challenges they face will shock you. Did you know that ...

- Women veterans are the fastest growing group among America’s homeless population.
- Female veterans are *four times* as likely as males to be homeless.
- The number of homeless women veterans more than *doubled* from 2006 – 2010.

We know when a female veteran is struggling financially, she’s almost never struggling alone. Very often she has young children who are in jeopardy of homelessness and hunger right along with her. But tragically, the challenges our female veterans experience when they return home from war are so unique, many of

these women just slip through the cracks.

- 87 percent of female veterans don’t use VA healthcare benefits, either because they aren’t aware of the benefits available to them or because they have difficulty accessing care.
- There’s a shortage of women specific housing for female veterans facing homelessness, and women with families are also challenged to find adequate housing for their entire family.
- Female veterans’ PTSD disability claims are denied more frequently than male veterans’ claims.

I hope I can count on you to stand with us and refuse to allow our heroes’ sacrifices to be forgotten. Your gifts help our female veterans – like Kathleen Baker, whose story you can read below – rebuild after war.

## Coalition helps one disabled female veteran rebuild after war

Kathleen Baker is an Army veteran who served in Iraq. She suffers from degenerative disc disease, caused by long months of carrying heavy gear packs, as well as PTSD, which she says “kinda snuck upon me” after treating detainees in Iraq.

Kathleen has two young children. She says they have definitely felt the weight of her injuries – a tragic example of the far-reaching impact female veterans’ disabilities can have. “My back injury limits a lot of what I can do with my children. Sometimes my back’s so bad that I don’t even really want to leave the house. And the PTSD doesn’t help either. I’m irritable. I’m short-tempered. It’s hard on my kids – they just get all the flak and none of the help.”

Kathleen is a single mom, another by-product of her PTSD. “I know my PTSD is why my marriage is no longer,” she says, flatly. “I know the anger and the tension was what destroyed the marriage.”

The months after her marriage ended were particularly difficult. “My husband was angry that I wanted to end the marriage so he didn’t pay me any child

support or any money for the first three months that he was gone. I was living on 80% disability and I wasn’t able to make my mortgage payment and pay my bills. It was [a question] of which bill am I going to pay this month? Am I going to pay water and power, am I going to buy groceries, am I going to pay the mortgage payment?”



Army veteran Kathleen Baker sharing her story at R2R.

Like other Road to Recovery attendees, Kathleen received a special \$500 gift check. “Receiving the \$500 check from the Coalition was shocking,” she says. “Honestly I am just so grateful for it. I will be able to not worry about what I’m going to buy my two kids for Christmas. It ought to be a very merry Christmas.”



## Your generosity helped when this disabled hero went two years without pay

**K**evin Snow was deployed to Iraq in 2007. “I was standing in line at the chow hall and a rocket impacted less than 5 meters from me,” he says. “I sustained a TBI, severe PTSD, and a torn eardrum due to the blast which resulted in half loss of hearing in my right ear.”

While Kevin’s story can be told in just a few sentences, the aftereffects of that fateful day have deeply affected his family for the last seven years.

“The injuries impacted not only myself but our five children,” his wife Adrienne describes. “It’s a different way of living. You have to adjust the living to the injuries themselves. [They don’t just] come home and you get to go back to the way your life was.”

Kevin’s injuries have been particularly difficult for their children. “Kevin’s injuries have impacted our oldest daughter,” Adrienne says. “They don’t have a very good relationship because she doesn’t understand his brain injury and PTSD sometimes prevent him from actually understanding that she is a teenager and she does have her teenage moments.” And the Snows’ nine-year-old son Nicholas asks, “Why can’t daddy play ball with me outside? My friend’s dad does.” “They don’t have the ‘normalcy’ other kids do,” Adrienne says.

When Kevin went from active duty to retirement, the Snow family went almost two years with no pay. “We had 5 kids at the time,” Adrienne says, “and the biggest burden was trying to find a house, paying bills, pay for groceries, feed everybody. We’ve had utilities shut off because when you go two years with no pay, people still want their money. Your pay stops but the bills don’t stop.” At one point money was so tight the Snows had to move in with Adrienne’s parents.

The Snows first found out about the Coalition about a year after Kevin retired. “We had no food,” Adrienne says. “We had no way to feed our kids. Our electric got shut off. We contacted the Coalition and without hesitation they sent us money for food. Within a day it was there.” The Coalition also helped the Snows – “within two days, without hesitation” Adrienne says – when they nearly lost their car to repossession.



Kevin and Adrienne Snow, pictured at R2R.

Kevin and Adrienne attended the 2014 Road to Recovery Conference, and were so surprised to receive a special gift: a \$500 check. “When they surprised us with a check last night we just started crying because our electricity’s about to get turned off,” Adrienne says. “Now we can pay our electric bill. It really was a blessing. We were not expecting it at all.”

And for the Snows, that check represented more than just money: it was an overwhelming demonstration of the Coalition’s supporters’ generosity and patriotism. “For me it just confirms to me that even though our government won’t take care of wounded warriors the way that they should, there’s great Americans who will come together to form these great nonprofits like Coalition that will step in and do what the government should be doing,” Kevin said. “They step in instead and they pick up the slack and they help wounded warriors. It’s just tremendous and I can’t thank them enough.”

“I’d like to say thank you to the donors who made it possible for us to come out here, but ‘thank you’ isn’t enough,” Adrienne said. “They have no idea the impact this has not only for us but our kids. They get to *be* kids for three days! ‘Thank you’ is never going to be enough for them – this is absolutely wonderful.”



## Monthly giving makes your gift go farther and helps more severely disabled troops

As a loyal supporter of the Coalition, you already know severely wounded troops and veterans across our country are facing homelessness, hunger, and other hardships as a result of their battlefield injuries.

I'm sure you agree this isn't the way we should "thank" our wounded troops for their service – especially those who have sacrificed life and limb for our freedoms.

With that in mind, I hope you'll consider joining *Partners for Heroes*, the Coalition's monthly giving program, which allows you to automatically and securely donate to the Coalition by checking account or credit card.

Your monthly gift will ensure the Coalition has the much-needed funds to provide emergency aid to our wounded heroes and their families – right away, when they need it most. Because every moment counts when you're facing homelessness or your child is going hungry.

Having a predictable monthly income stream enables the Coalition to plan more efficiently. And that allows us to rescue more disabled troops facing evictions, utility cutoffs, and other financial disasters.

Participating in *Partners for Heroes* is safe and secure,

and has great benefits for you, as well:

- ★ Your monthly donation will be conveniently debited from your checking account or charged to your credit card each month. There is no need to waste time writing checks or searching for stamps and you can cancel at any time.
- ★ The number of Coalition mailings you receive will be reduced, so the money saved on postage and printing will make your gift go farther each month.
- ★ Your monthly giving will be tracked and at the end of the year, you will receive a statement of your donations for tax purposes.

Your monthly gift is important no matter the amount. When you have lost an arm or leg and can't work, or your wife has quit her job to care for you as you battle PTSD, every dollar makes a huge difference just to help put food on the table.

Please consider becoming a *Partners for Heroes* contributor today so your monthly gift can start making a difference right away for more severely wounded service members and their families. For more information on how to enroll, please see your enclosed reply form.



## Have you remembered our wounded heroes in your Will?

“What I spent I lost; what I possessed is left to others; what I gave away remains with me.”

— Joseph Addison, Poet

Leave a legacy of love and support for America's troops severely wounded in the war on terror by remembering them in your Will or insurance policy. For a private and confidential discussion of how to leave the Coalition a charitable bequest, contact:

**Mary Price, Donor Relations Manager**  
Coalition to Salute America's Heroes  
**Direct line:** (703) 348-9914  
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# What these veterans wrote to Santa may break your heart ...

At the 2014 Road to Recovery Conference we collected "letters to Santa" from disabled veterans and their children. While many of the requests were not that different from what our families might ask for – bikes, dolls, other toys – some of the wishes we saw were incredibly touching. And since you, and all our Coalition friends, help make wishes like these come true for our struggling heroes, we wanted to share a few of them with you.

Dear Santa,

This year I've been very:

Nice

Naughty (but I can explain)

If you are not too busy, here are a few things I am wishing for:

A home to live in Because WE ARE Homeless I Don't NEED TOYS But my little Brother and Baby Sister might like a toy.

Love,  
Tristin Kelley

Dear Santa,

This year I've been very:

Nice

Naughty (but I can explain)

If you are not too busy, here are a few things I am wishing for:

My Family to become Close & Successful Especially My next Brother

To Bless Me & My Wife with Accers where we succeed and Bless others.

To pray for my car note or Either my Student loans

Love,  
Grant -  
Shabrina "TAY" CARR

Dear Santa,

This year I've been very:

Nice

Naughty (but I can explain) <sup>IN A NICE WAY!!</sup>

If you are not too busy, here are a few things I am wishing for:

I WOULD BE BLESSED AND HONORED FOR MY WIFE AND I TO HAVE <sup>OUR FIRST</sup> BABY BOY OR GIRL!!

BLESSINGS TO YOU ON THIS YEARS TRAVELS

Love,  
JOEL STEINMANN  
AND ~~TIFFANY~~ TIFFANY TOO!!

Dear Santa,

This year I've been very:

Nice

Naughty (but <sup>we</sup> can explain) <sup>mostly</sup>

If you are not too busy, here are a few things I am wishing for:

on Jan 15, 2015 we'll be celebrating 10 yrs of marriage We have ~~NEVER~~ been on a honeymoon. this would be a dream come true & Love.

Love,  
Richard + Rebecca  
(He) (Her)  
Mawey  
Walt + Shalad/Mawey

Christmas is coming!  
Tell Santa if you've been naughty or nice... and what you wish for this year!



## Heroes who attended 2014 Road to Recovery say THANK YOU

*We spoke with many grateful heroes at the 2014 Road to Recovery Conference who wanted to say THANK YOU to you, our faithful supporters ... for both the conference in sunny California and the surprise \$500 gift check just in time for Christmas!*

“If another female vet or anybody came up to me and asked about the Coalition and this Road to Recovery Conference, I would say yes, yes, yes, do it. **It’s been very emotional because it hits pretty deep but it also allows some of the hurt and the scariness that goes on in your head to come out.** I’ve been suicidal the last month or two and to hear the hope that there’s stuff out there for us and that I’m going to be okay ... how wonderful today is. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!”

— Disabled Air Force veteran Colleen Hall

“When we first entered into this journey after Dan was injured, everything in our life got set aside. Our children had to leave their home, they had to leave their friends, they had to leave everything they knew and literally give up their childhood to live in a hospital environment for many years. **The Road to Recovery Conference gives us back that family time that we lost for so many years.** So many things get lost, whether it’s a lost memory, due to the traumatic brain injury, or it’s a lost opportunity because we’re so busy trying to put him back together again or get through each day. We’re now at a place where we can come together as a family and reclaim our family time that was lost.”

— Torrey Shannon, wife of veteran disabled in Iraq

“Receiving the \$500 check from the Coalition was shocking, and I honestly am just so grateful for it. **I will be able to not worry about what I’m going to buy my two kids for Christmas.** It ought to be a very merry Christmas!”

— Disabled Army veteran Kathleen Baker

“We were blown away when we received the surprise \$500 check. That’s a huge kind of relief because I know we’ll actually have money for Christmas this year. That’s big for me. **We just want to thank the donors so much.** This is something special that our kids will remember for a long, long time.”

— Dennis Wilkoff, Army veteran disabled in Iraq

“The \$500 check was completely unexpected. My hope is we’ll use some of it for Christmas presents but I mean realistically it’s going to go to buying groceries, it’s going to go to paying bills, but that will also free up other expenses as well so we can try to get caught up on those things. If I were to run into a donor of the Coalition, I would be so thankful that they cared enough for military members and their families. **There’s just no words to express how grateful I am that somebody would care about my family that much.**”

— Chris Miller, veteran disabled in Iraq

### Please consider sharing your e-mail address

By providing your e-mail address on your enclosed newsletter reply form you’ll start receiving thank you notes, photos and updates about how your continued generosity is improving the lives of our wounded heroes and their families.