



The Road to Recovery Report

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

Volume 65 ★ Christmas 2017

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



Your Generosity Makes the Holidays Bright for Our Heroes

“There is no way to fully prepare yourself for the trials you may face in the months or even years of waiting for [VA] compensation. This is why I feel it is so important that the Coalition exists. Our families really do need the help.”

— SSG J.D. Williams, U.S. Army (Ret.), triple amputee, pictured above with his family

It's the most wonderful time of the year ... unless you're a disabled veteran who's not sure he's going to be able to keep a roof over his family's head this Christmas, let alone put a present or two under the tree.

That's why at this time of year your generosity is needed more than ever. Because (I know you agree): No veteran who put his life and his future on the line defending America from Islamic extremists should face homelessness and hunger at Christmastime.

I'm so grateful for generous, patriotic friends like you – and I'm counting on your help to make this “the most wonderful time of the year” for America's wounded warriors and their families.

Your giving helps turn fear, despair, and hopelessness into JOY through holiday gift checks – and helps avert the foreclosures, evictions, and utility disconnections that might otherwise leave American veterans homeless or without heat in the dead of winter.

Thank you – and Merry Christmas!

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Dear Friend of Our Wounded Heroes,

“I hate war as only a soldier who has lived it can,” said Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, “only as one who has seen its brutality, its futility, its stupidity.”

But the brutality, futility and stupidity are with us still. Daily come reports that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are heating up, even as our troops move into Syria. We are striving against an unmitigated evil every bit as ghastly and deadly as that we contended against in World War II.

But this battle, unlike that of World War II, is being fought by a small minority of Americans who answered the call to defend our freedoms and heritage. Their sacrifices are brought home to us in news reports of battlefield casualties and film footage of military caskets being offloaded in Delaware ... in statistics of veterans suffering from missing limbs, traumatic brain injuries, and post-traumatic stress (PTS) ... and in reports of soaring suicide rates of military veterans who simply cannot escape the battlefield demons that have followed them home.

The holiday season offers an excellent opportunity for the rest of us to stand up and express our appreciation for the sacrifices these heroes have made, and to listen to their testimony. That actually is the only proven therapy for post-traumatic stress. Medical science has come up with all sorts of advanced prostheses to help wounded warriors compensate for missing limbs – but there are no pills or medical magic to treat the inner wounds.

But there *are* ways we can help. The wounded warriors with PTS derive great therapeutic benefit from discussing their experiences with people who are sympathetic and do not pass judgment. Sometimes they can share with professional therapists, but anyone who cares can lend an ear – a minister, a neighbor or just a friend. The wounded veterans are most comfortable with others who share their experience and can relate to what they have been through, but in a real sense, their stories are our own stories. They have gone through hell so we didn't have to.

My plea to you today is not to forget our War on Terror veterans – and their struggles – as you celebrate the holidays with your friends and family ... and that you take any opportunity you have to listen to their stories, pray for their healing, and thank them for their service. (See page 4 of your newsletter to learn more about a simple but impactful way to do just that!)

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us at the Coalition.

Gratefully yours,

David Walker
President & CEO



Coalition Grant Supplies 50 Beds to Homeless Veterans

The Coalition's Colonel Martin Badegian, U.S. Army (Ret.) and his family had the honor of presenting a grant to Serena Arvizu of Beds for the Brave to supply 50 bed frames and bedding for homeless veterans, accompanying mattresses donated by the VA and Raytheon Missile Systems.

Coalition Donations at Work During Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria Crises

Thanks to generous Coalition donors, we were able to help several severely wounded War on Terror veterans who were victims of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria. In all, over \$12,700 was sent to former troops in desperate need. In addition, we donated \$2,500 to Operation Once in a Lifetime, which was to cover the cost of 250 blankets being distributed to military families in need during the Hurricane Harvey crisis. Sgt. Patrick Sowers of the "Operation" commended us saying: "We have worked with the Coalition for many years...and, true to form, when we asked for their help with this relief effort, they didn't hesitate to step up and give generously."



Thank You from Veterans Your Generosity Helped Through Revolutionary Medical Treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS)

The Coalition proudly supports the Rocky Mountain Hyperbaric Association for Brain Injuries' Healing Our Heroes program. Your generosity has allowed us to provide grants of more than \$50,000 for treatment of post-traumatic stress and traumatic brain injuries (TBI).

Healing Our Heroes supports disabled veterans by assisting with payments for hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) treatments and financial assistance for lodging for veterans traveling to Colorado for treatment. HBOT is an FDA-approved medical treatment which enhances the body's natural healing process by inhalation of 100% oxygen in a chamber where the atmospheric pressure is increased and controlled.

HBOT is particularly useful in the fields of neurology and wound care, including TBI and PTS – the "signature wounds" of the War on Terror. Studies using HBOT as alternative therapy show that patients have a dramatic increase in cognitive abilities, improved motor skills recovery, and a significant decrease in some symptoms.

To learn more about HBOT's revolutionary impact, visit www.rockymountainhyperbaricassociation.org.



Your generosity helped these heroes get treatment they desperately needed to fight their battle with PTS after battling radical Islamic extremists in the War on Terror. These heartfelt thank yous are for you.



"My name is Jeff Thompson, and I am from Portland, Maine. I came to treatment because I wasn't sleeping, and things were starting to get really overwhelming. Even small things seemed like they were the end of the world. I'm starting to actually sleep through the night, and my mind is starting to feel more clear. Thank you, sincerely, for allowing me to take part in this treatment. Your donations made this possible, and for that I am forever grateful."



"I want to thank you for making this treatment possible for veterans. It works. I feel so much better. Thank you." – Cecil Stroud Jr.



For eleven years the **Heroes Thanking Heroes (HTH)** program has provided part-time, flexible employment to wounded veterans or their primary caregivers by 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 offers qualified participants training and experience working in a “virtual call center,” providing valuable training for future potential jobs.

Those enrolled in the program find increased self-worth and continued healing from this opportunity. Many HTH employees would not otherwise be able to work due to ongoing medical appointments and treatments, or care-giving responsibilities. Caregivers in the program may even make their calls, if they choose, from a military hospital setting, enabling them to remain by the side of the veteran while they undergo treatment or surgery.



HTH Representative Spotlight: The Livingston Family



He cannot remember much from about five months before the mortar hit and still today doesn’t remember anything for about seven months afterward. His eyes began operating independent of each other so basic things like walking a straight line were difficult for him. He has also developed dissociation disorder and when these episodes happen, he shakes and can become very combative. He has no clue what is happening and everything blacks out for him so it is very scary for us both. Severe migraines from the head injury can sometimes keep him in the bed for days at a time.

“My husband Jason deployed to Afghanistan while I was expecting our daughter Berlyn. Three months later, I was woken by a call in the early morning hours telling me Jason had taken shrapnel to the back of the neck and was being airlifted out. The next two days were spent waiting for any kind of details possible, a million things racing through my mind, having no idea where he was or what was going on.

“Finally, I received word that his COB [Company Operating Base] had mortars dropped on it from above. Jason and other platoon members that hadn’t gone out that day ran through the chow hall and sleeping quarters looking for anyone that may have been injured from the first round of mortars. That’s when the second round started and a mortar hit very close to Jason. He took a piece of shrapnel to the back of the head where the neck meets and was thrown into one of the buildings, hitting his head and the right side of his face.

“Jason’s recovery has been a long one but after changes to how we do things, it has become our normal. His injuries include migraines, TBI, compounded PTS, bilateral knee damage, a herniated disk in his lower back, a bulging disk in his upper back and other complex issues.

“Being able to work from home through the Heroes Thanking Heroes program has been a huge blessing for us. Without this opportunity, working would be impossible for me. The flexibility of this position gives me the ability to be able to drive him to his appointments since he no longer drives and also to talk to doctors when he is having trouble finding the words. The income helps me to provide for our family and put money back for Christmas for the kids and things that need to be done around our home. Making thank you calls to donors has also been a great outlet for me to be able to step away and have time to myself for a bit. The best part of the job is reaching another veteran or caregiver that says they understand what we are going through and we’re both able to say thank you to each other. It’s a truly heartwarming feeling. I really believe that once a soldier, always a soldier. When I married my soldier, we became a military family and always will be. It’s in our blood.”





The Mullen Family

“The Coalition has helped my family in many ways. Not only do I have a part-time job to help support my family, but I have been included in a larger family with lots of moral support. My family appreciates all the Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes does for us and other veteran families.”

— Lacy Mullen, HTH Representative

“I am so thankful to the Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes. They have provided so much more than just an opportunity to work from home ... They have become my new Brotherhood – just as my husband had them in his war, now I have them in mine.”

— Bonnie, HTH Representative



Our HTH representatives are more than just employees! They’re also patriotic Americans who work hard to raise money so we can hire new vets ... demonstrating that our veteran families never set aside their dedication and selfless service for our country.

Here’s just one example: HTH rep Kacy and her family recently held a bake sale, raising \$130 to donate back into our program and to help as many veteran families as we can! Kacy, whose husband is an OIF disabled Marine veteran, told us:

“I want to teach my kids to fight for a cause you believe

in – and I believe in the Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes. I have seen firsthand the great things they do for our veterans. Our family is one of many that have been helped when times were hard. I will continue to raise money for this great organization, because every dollar helps another veteran pay a bill or put food on their table.”



If You’ve Ever Wanted to Meet Up with the Coalition in Your Community, This May Be Your Chance ...

Did you know that on our Facebook page you can find upcoming Coalition events around the country ... possibly including one or more near you? To learn more, “Like” our page, and visit the “Events” tab – or go directly to www.facebook.com/pg/SaluteHeroes/events. We hope to see you in your neighborhood soon!

Leave a Lasting Legacy of Love for Our Disabled Heroes

“What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal.”

— American Writer Albert Pike

It’s easy to remember the Coalition in your will or insurance policy – and when you do, you continue your proud and patriotic legacy of service and sacrifice for America’s severely disabled War on Terror troops and veterans for years to come. For a private and confidential discussion of how to leave the Coalition a charitable bequest, contact:

Donor Relations Manager • Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes
Direct line: (703) 348-9914 • **Toll Free:** (888) 447-2588, Ext. 103 • info@saluteheroes.org

The Coalition to Salute America’s Heroes does not provide legal or financial advice to prospective or current donors. Always consult with your attorney and financial advisor before making any important decisions regarding your estate.



Giving is Now EASIER Than Ever... Become a Partner for Heroes!

Your gift to the Coalition can make an *even bigger* difference for our struggling severely disabled veterans when you become a member of the **Partners for Heroes** monthly giving program.

Being a **Partner for Heroes** has great benefits that make it as easy as possible to continue your faithful patriotic support for America's heroes.

- ★ Your monthly donation will be conveniently debited from your checking account or charged to your credit card each month, so you don't have to spend time writing checks or searching for stamps.
- ★ We track your monthly giving and send you a convenient statement of donations at the end of the year for tax purposes.
- ★ You'll receive less mail from us – and the money we save on postage and printing helps your gifts go further



each month. We'll continue sending you *The Road to Recovery Report* and quarterly updates.

- ★ You have full control of your giving and can change, pause or cancel your gifts at any time.

Your monthly gift is life-changing in any amount. Because when you have lost a limb and can't work, or your spouse has quit his or her job to care for you as you battle PTS, *every dollar matters.* And every minute counts when you're facing homelessness or your child is going hungry.

So I hope you'll become a **Partner for Heroes** today – to help ensure we have the funds we need to provide emergency aid to wounded heroes and their families right away, when they need it most.

For more information on how to enroll, please see your enclosed contribution form.

We Asked. You Answered. We're Listening!

The Coalition recently surveyed our patriotic supporters about the government's ongoing disgraceful treatment of America's wounded and disabled veterans. This annual survey is our way of getting the pulse of our generous friends – reaching out for feedback and listening up on the issues that are important to you. You hear from us regularly on the issues our War on Terror veterans are facing – but we want to hear from you, too.

The results show our generous and patriotic friends care deeply about the shameful way the government is treating our disabled veterans. Please read this sampling of survey results carefully – because the way our government is treating wounded and disabled veterans is a national scandal.

- **90% of you are OUTRAGED** that more than 800,000 veterans never received needed medical care from the VA – and more than 307,000 veterans have died waiting for care.
- **96% of you want CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS** for those who created these “secret wait lists” to get big pay bonuses out of the scam.
- **97% of you believe it is OUTRAGEOUS** or unfortunate that captured Islamic terrorists are getting far better medical care from our military at Guantanamo Bay than our wounded heroes are receiving from our own government.
- **98% of you believe it is OUTRAGEOUS** or unfortunate that it takes ten months on average (and sometimes more than a year) for our troops who have been catastrophically wounded fighting radical Islamic terrorists to receive their first government disability check.
- **94% of you believe it is OUTRAGEOUS** or unfortunate that the federal bureaucracy systematically minimizes the severity of battlefield injuries suffered by our wounded heroes in order to keep their disability pay lower than it should be as a way to save money.
- **90% of you are hopeful** that the results of this survey will **inspire and motivate President Trump to make good on his campaign pledge** to care for America's wounded heroes and disabled veterans.



Your Generosity at Work

The requests we receive from hurting heroes vary widely in amount and need. We just never know what we're going to hear when we pick up the phone or answer our email. What we do know is that the men and women who reach out to us are desperate, facing disaster with nowhere else to turn.

And we also know that it's only through your support that we're able to help them, quickly and generously, to take some of the burden off their shoulders – a burden incurred through their selfless defense of our country in the War on Terror.



Michael W. from Little Elm, Texas served our country bravely in Iraq – and now suffers from post-traumatic stress (PTS). He needed \$789.98 for urgent vehicle repairs.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$789.98

Retired Army Staff Sergeant Kenneth B. from Alexandria, Louisiana was medically retired due to PTS after serving in Iraq. He asked for \$1,000.00 to buy gas and food for his family.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$1,000.00

USMC Corporal Jean D. from Jacksonville, North Carolina was paralyzed serving in the War on Terror, and requested \$1,431.45 to cover rent.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$1,431.45

Retired USMC Lance Corporal William H. from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania suffers from PTS after serving in the War on Terror. He desperately needed \$2,550.00 to pay his rent and keep a roof over his family's head.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$2,550.00

Army Staff Sergeant Courtney J. from Odenton, Maryland suffers from post-traumatic stress after serving

in Iraq. He needed \$2,769.20 for urgent medical expenses.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$2,769.20

Army Specialist Leah B. from San Pedro, California suffers from PTS after serving in Iraq. She called asking for \$4,340.22 for critical living expenses, including rent and utilities.

★ Emergency financial aid from Coalition donors:
\$4,340.22

"With the VA not doing their job, it was the Coalition that kept us going. The Coalition is family taking care of family. Their help has enabled us to put food on the table when other organizations couldn't care less."

– Retired Chief Warrant Officer Brian Haas

Important Update on a Letter You Received from General Singlaub

Early this summer you should have received a letter from us about an exciting matching grant opportunity that would **automatically double the impact of your gift**.

Some extremely generous Coalition friends (who asked to remain anonymous) offered \$175,000 to match the gifts of other supporters to help military families facing hunger, homelessness, and other financial disasters.

This generous matching grant was a Godsend, as the Coalition relies solely on voluntary donations to fund our efforts to help our wounded warriors. And it came just in time to provide a boost during the summer – our critical slow season for donations when many of our

good friends are away on vacation or spending time with family, not reading their mail from us.

We received thousands of generous donations to that appeal – to the tune of \$150,274 so far. And months later, donations are still coming in. We're hoping to get closer to the \$175,000 goal, so the full amount of the matching grant will be activated.

We are so grateful for the continued support of friends like you who don't hesitate to give generously to rescue a hero in need. I'm continually awed by the way generous supporters like you show your appreciation to the men and women who went to war to protect us from Islamic extremists. Thank you!

Thanksgiving THANKS from Disabled Veterans

Right about now you're probably getting ready to celebrate Thanksgiving with your family and friends. But as you do, we hope you'll also remember the disabled War on Terror veterans who may not be so fortunate ... heroes struggling to scrape together the money just to keep the lights on and a roof over their kids' heads.

Thankfully, there's something we can do together to help. The thank you notes below are from heroes we helped last Thanksgiving with \$60 gift checks to put a special holiday meal on the table – and as you can see, even that relatively small amount brought them immeasurable joy. Your gift at the holiday season helps a hero with financial needs ... but it also sends the message that they are not forgotten. They (and we) are so grateful for your support.

“My family would like to thank you for the gift ... you truly have made our Thanksgiving Day special. **We are blessed to have families like yours to support veterans like myself with such special gifts as this. Your gift will be providing an amazing Thanksgiving Dinner.** God bless you for the amazing thought and gift.”

— Disabled veteran Sonia M.

“Today we received your letter with a [Thanksgiving meals] check. **Today was a rough day but you guys managed to bring a smile and a tear to my eye.** Living in NYC isn't easy for us but we manage and we push thru because that's what the ARMY taught me. This check will for sure bring a great meal for myself, my wife and, children.”

— Disabled Army veteran Joseph S.

“There are no words to describe the blessings we feel after receiving the Thanksgiving gift. There couldn't have been a better time, to where we have needed the help, than now. At the moment we are struggling and this ensures we will have a great 'feast' as a family. **My husband and I are still in shock someone would do something like this for us, to even think of us during the Holiday season.** So many times my husband thinks he is forgotten and times like this are huge reminders he is not, nor ever will be.”

— Casey C., wife of disabled veteran Brien

“Words cannot express the thanks for the generosity you have shown to my family. This last few years has been a battle trying to recover from all that has come our way with my Military Service. This year has been especially hard and to come home from the VA Hospital today to receive a letter and gift from you is amazing. **We will be having a Thanksgiving and on the list of thank you, Coalition to Salute America's Heroes.** My family is grateful and it means the world to us. It is humbling to know that some still care.”

— Disabled veteran David S.

“These last few months have been very trying for myself and my family. Financially it has been tough just to stay afloat. On a limited budget, we are always worrying about how we will provide. **When I checked the mail and opened the letter from the Coalition, I was humbled and thankful for the money they offered; this will allow my family to have a decent Thanksgiving meal.** I was shot twice in the chest, and underwent 23 surgeries on my stomach, and am left with a bullet lodged in my spine. Small gestures like the monetary donation I received from the Coalition reaffirms why I still believe in my country. I truly thank all the people who have donated to the Coalition, because I know they are changing veterans lives for the better.”

— Disabled Army veteran Robbie C.

Please consider sharing your e-mail address

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