



Letter From Craig Remsburg

Father of Injured Army Ranger SSG Cory Remsburg

Army Ranger families helping other Army Ranger families.

Here's what I have learned about Rangers and their families.

It was on Oct 1, 2009, and Army Ranger SSG Cory Remsburg was doing what he and his family knew was a very dangerous profession. After all, he had been an Army Ranger since graduating high school in St. Louis, MO in June 2001. And it was during his 10th deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, that the Oct 1st date would forever change Cory and his family.

It didn't matter so much that it was a successful mission that he was on that day, what mattered most was he was being kept alive by fellow Army Ranger medics. An IED blast struck Cory on his right side, penetrating his right skull and right eye, and burns/shrapnel wounds on his face, arm and back. It was this initial triage by Ranger medics that no doubt saved his life.

From the battlefield to Kandahar Airfield medical center there were multi-country medical professionals waiting to continue the efforts of Ranger medics. Several surgeries on his eye and head, and within hours, he was on his way to the second stop, Bagram Airfield, where higher level hospital capabilities were put to the test to continue keeping Cory alive.

It was at this time that I got my first notification about Cory's injury and condition. The Company Commander called my cell phone, and explained in unnerving detail about his injuries. Words like, near drowning, right head penetrating wound, right eye penetrating wound, burns, shrapnel wounds, unconscious, lungs collapsed, needed to be resuscitated... mind numbing indeed. I immediately started to notify the family, with the purpose to 'join together' and collectively determine our next uncertain actions.

That was the first time that the organization called, Lead The Way Fund (LTWF) was introduced in the conversation. The Ranger liaison stated that LTWF would pay the flight for my wife to be relocated from Phoenix, AZ to Raleigh, NC to meet and confer together with other family members.

There were more surgeries while at Bagram Airfield medical center, Afghanistan, on Cory's eye and his head where the concern about brain swelling was paramount to the medical team. Within hours from surgery, the decision to move Cory to the Landstuhl Medical Center in Germany was made. What came with that was a dedicated team of an Emergency Room doctor and nurse, and medical technician, called CCATT.

While at Landstuhl, Cory underwent many additional surgeries to keep him alive. The medical team advised to family to join Cory in Germany, as he was unstable to transport to the US. Again, the LTWF stepped up and assisted with the expense of the family flights to Germany without any hesitation. The family stayed with Cory for almost two weeks, and then the decision was made to move Cory back to the states. Again, LTWF funded the return trip's expenses for family members that were not being picked up by the federal government.

Next stop was Bethesda Naval Medical Center, where Cory lay in a coma-state for over a month. Family decided that the Tampa VA center, in Florida was the best medical facility for Cory to continue his recovery. It was at that time that LTWF founders Jim and Mary Regan visited with Cory and the family. Jim and Mary were very sincere and compassionate about helping Cory and the family, offering the needs that the military could not authorize.

LTWF eagerly agreed to assist Cory with the special bed Cory needed when, as an outpatient, he was moved to a nearby apartment. And there was some special equipment that was provided Cory to continue his recovery. LTWF engaged with Cory and his family only hours after his injury. The organization continues today to follow-up and monitor Cory's situation, and offers both comfort to the family and invaluable assistance to Cory and us.

