

## How can I help a Veteran in need this Christmas?

This is a common question for Operation Barnabas. **We have the perfect opportunity for YOU to help 5 very worthy disabled Veterans this Christmas season!** Operation Barnabas of Des Moines is partnering for our 5<sup>th</sup> year with Freedom Alliance for their Presents for Patriots program, adopting wounded soldiers and their families for Christmas. We are excited to announce that we are adopting these five wonderful families!

Given the number of children involved, Operation Barnabas is collecting Target and Walmart gift cards along with monetary donations so that our adopted Veterans can experience the joy in purchasing Christmas gifts for their families. **Please consider making a gift card or cash donation to these deserving families.**

### TO MAKE A DONATION:

- Please mail a tax deductible donation along with a Christmas card to: Operation Barnabas, ATTN: Linn Hayden at 405 NW Sturbridge, Ankeny, IA 50023. All donations and Christmas cards will be distributed among all 5 families.
- Or can join us for our meeting on Thursday, Dec. 14th at 7 PM at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Urbandale.

Once all donations are gathered they will be delivered to these families, with a goal of December 16.

**Thank you sharing Christmas joy with these wounded heroes and their families!**



Sergeant Steven H. was deployed to Kuwait, Africa, and Iraq twice. A botched Army surgery led to complications resulting in significant groin area damage. Hoping another surgery will be able to reduce the severity of the nerve damage. "I suffer from major depression. I have no cartilage left in my right wrist, PTSD, and I also have significant back injuries and chronic nerve damage. I can't even hold my child and sometimes in such pain I just crawl up the stairs to get to my bed to lay down because I can't fight the intolerable and debilitating pain. We have 5 children. I live day to day

trying to function without pain so I can just enjoy my kids. Right now I'm trying to figure out how I can take care of my family as a husband and barely care for myself. My wife is my non-medical attendant and every day I just pray I get relief."



Staff Sergeant Thomas C. deployed twice, once to Iraq and once to Kuwait. He is currently being treated for Multiple Sclerosis and blindness in one eye. Thomas saw many firefights and felt the chocks of many IED blasts that led to the loss in his eye due to a detached retina. It is likely if he had deployed more, he may have lost the sight in his other eye as well. He is a single dad who gets out in January, 2017.



Sergeant Duran N. was medically retired from the Army in 2016. He deployed four times in total, three to Iraq and one to Afghanistan. He suffers from PTSD, a Traumatic Brain Injury, back and leg injuries, as well as sleep apnea and nightmares. His injuries were a result of the multiple deployments and exposure to many IED blasts, rocket attacks, and firefights. The N. family has had a hard time transitioning to civilian life. The adjustment from active duty pay to VA pay and trying to find a job that understands his disabilities have been challenges for him.

Sergeant James P. was deployed four times, twice to Iraq, once to Afghanistan and once to Korea. He has major back issues along with foot and knee injuries from deployments. One deployment means 100's of missions carrying 100 pound ruck sacks, armor and gear. Three combat deployments took its toll on James. They are asking for help because they will be transitioning out of the military, with a medical retirement, first thing in January, and there are a lot of costs associated with setting up a new life.



Sergeant Matthew J. deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan and just returned from Korea. He was a medic and suffers from PTSD, epilepsy, essential tremors, and cubital syndrome as a result of those deployments. His symptoms showed up when he was serving in Korea and he was sent back to the US. The doctors say that all of the issues are a likely result of the multiple blasts and burn pits he's been near during Iraq and Afghanistan. His wife, Melody, has out of work for 4 months during the transition and they are still trying to catch up on bills from that.