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Engineer Celebrates 40 Years of Service

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It was 40 years ago in February 1968 when 18 year old Steven Morrow left up-state New York for Marine Corps boot camp and subsequently found himself wielding a Browning 50 Caliber Machine Gun in the door of a CH-46 helicopter in Vietnam. Today, U.S. Army Warrant Officer 4 Morrow is still in uniform proudly serving with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Asadabad, Afghanistan in support of the Global War on Terror. During a ceremony celebrating his 40 years of military service, Morrow reflected on some of his experiences.

"From an early age I knew I was going to join the military," said Morrow. "As soon as I turned 18, I dropped out of the Watertown School of Commerce and headed to the recruiting station with paperwork in hand". "Four hours later, I was in the Marine Corps delayed entry program, and the rest was history," he said. After spending four years in the Marine Corps which included some time as a Door Gunner in Vietnam, Morrow crossed over to the Army in 1973 and was stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky with the 2/17th Cavalry as a helicopter Crew Chief. He later served as an Aero Scout/ Observer in Germany and then as a Fireman/Medic at Fort Drum. In that time, Morrow logged several hundred hours in the front seat of an OH58 Observation Helicopter, and even considered going to flight school, but he missed the cut-off.

By 1978 Morrow was tired of the icy winters at Fort Drum and moved to Arizona near his two sisters where he worked as a maintenance technician at an ammo storage facility for the State of Arizona, a position which required him to join the Arizona National Guard. In 1985 Sergeant First Class Morrow was selected for an Engineering Warrant and continued to work there and serve in the Arizona National Guard as an Engineer. CWO4 Morrow temporarily retired in 2004 with 38 years total military service, but came back into the Army Reserve that same year. "I learned really fast that retirement isn't all it's cracked up



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to be," said Morrow. "I really missed the camaraderie of the military and the satisfaction of doing something with a higher purpose," he said. Morrow joined the 46th Engineers Facility Engineer Team and deployed to Jalalabad, Afghanistan. "I really enjoyed the challenge and working with the Afghans during this deployment, and wanted to stay longer" said Morrow. So in June 2007 Morrow transferred to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a Resident Engineer in Asadabad where he is working closely with Afghans on road and bridge projects, hydro power stations, and border police facilities.

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When asked what advice he would give a young Soldier, he said: "First I'd like to thank them for serving". "I have a lot of respect for the folks joining now, because they know coming in that they are going to be deployed to either Iraq or Afghanistan".

"Also I would tell them to accept things, don't fight the system, and get as much out of it as you can while you are in," said Morrow. "If you have an opportunity to go to a class, take it," he said. "Always be willing to put in the hours and learn, because the Army really takes good care of its people, as long as they keep their head up and stay professional," said Morrow. "Always trust your leaders, your equipment, and your training". Recently Morrow requested a six month extension to his tour in Afghanistan. According to Morrow, when the paperwork came back he learned he had been approved for up to a year extension if he chooses to stay. "I am humbled by the Army's generosity," said Morrow. "I'll retire when they kick me out."



Resident Engineer Morrow takes time away from his bridge and hydro power station projects to work with Afghanistan youths on their "English".



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