



## Postcard from Afghanistan

Brave Benson - Virginia



In June 2011, I received an offer to deploy to Afghanistan for the Army Corps of Engineer. My family was not overly excited that I was being deployed in a War Zone, but were supportive and encouraging, after they got over the initial shock. In August 2011, two months later, my oldest son join me in Afghanistan. His mother was not very comfortable having both of us serving in Afghanistan either. He is Private 1st Class Keith Benson Jr. with the U.S. Army 95th Sapper 14th Eng and I am Keith Benson, Sr., a civilian with the Army Corps of Engineers. It is a rare occasion when a father and son can serve our nation at the same time, especially given the age difference. We are both scheduled to return to our respective locations around the same time. For years to come, we can share our thoughts of Afghanistan in a way that, if we both had not been there, and at the same time, we would possibly not understand. In this picture, I got a chance to visit with him at his location is Camp Leatherneck. This was a very proud moment to share time with him, my name sake.

I have enjoyed the challenge and it is a very rewarding mission. Being on the USACE team and contributing to the rebuilding and stabilization of Afghanistan. We are making a difference with all the projects we place in service. Rebuilding is a small part, but we are also task with mentoring and teaching Afghan Nationals how to build and sustain facilities in a safe manner.

I would encourage all whom have an urge to deploy to consider talking with someone who has deployed. It is a sacrifice being separated from your family, but worth every moment. I will always share my experience with others how important and exciting deployment can be.