



Postcard from Afghanistan

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I came to Afghanistan by way of the United States Navy Seabees. For anyone not familiar with the program, basically Seabees are the Naval construction force. Coming to Afghanistan and serving my country and family had personal meaning for me. Being from the great state of New York, I took the attacks to our great nation on Sept. 11, 2001, personally. I was stationed in Syracuse, N.Y., that day and from the Federal Building, I watched live as the second plane crashed tragically into the second floor of the Twin Towers. I had a feeling of revenge and wanted to do my part to contribute. When I found out about the opportunity to serve in Afghanistan, I was excited, yet humbled at the opportunity.

Now, having said that and having served two tours in Iraq and a year in Afghanistan, I would have to say my priorities have shifted in a more positive way. As everyone knows, we have made astounding construction contributions to this country. Yet, I take even greater pride in another area that I think is the most important thing we can do to impact this country in a positive manner: our work

with children. I believe those accomplishments are going to be seen as our greatest success. Being a father of five kids myself, I have gained a newfound respect for the impact we have on their future here. I believe our mentorship, leadership and educational contributions are going to be remembered long after we leave. I take personal honor and pride that I may have had a least some small part in giving these children the one thing they needed most to succeed: hope.

It was an honor to serve here and I will forever cherish the memories and experiences I have gained. I can honestly say that during my 16 years in the Navy, this not only was the most challenging, stressful and scary experience, but also one of the most rewarding and amazing experiences of my career and of my life. I will miss this place and the many people I met here. I wish for nothing less than continued success to this organization and family in the future, and I cannot be prouder to say I was allowed the opportunity to serve and make a difference. HOORAH and have a fine SEABEE day!

