ValOUR-IT: Outside the Headlines

Description

There is wonderful news coming out of Iraq these days. Charts show IEDs are down, attacks on Coalition bases are down, engagements with terrorists and insurgents are down, civilian deaths are down. Down, down, down. And all while there are more soldiers walking and living among the locals.

But thereâ€™s something hidden going on here that doesnâ€™t make the headlines: the injured. For every loss of life among American soldiers, several others are usually wounded.

It is those publicly-uncounted wounded that Valour-IT serves. While their buddy is laid to rest, they are the ones fighting for their lives in a hospital bed. As the family of the fallen is carried in the arms of their friends and fellow military families, the wounded soldiers are wondering what their lives are going to be like with broken bodies that will never be the same again. As their buddy is being laid to rest with honors, the politicians make a quick sweep through wards filled with wounded that will still be there after the camera flashes stop. The families of the living struggle to put one foot in front of the other and the wounded wonder if the prosthetic feet are as good as everybody says. The fallenâ€™s loved ones dream of the day it will stop feeling like a knife in their chest, and the wounded hope that when the haze of the painkillers lifts, the PTSD and TBI wonâ€™t be as bad as they seem right now.

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Loved ones whose hearts are aching in loss reach out to those around them, express themselves, plan memorials for their fallen hero, bellow out the rage over what has been ripped from them, mourn the futures lost.

Not so for the warfighter, whose connectedness is dependent on who visits or calls that day, and who is now discovering that the greatest indignity of severed nerves, shattered bones, and amputated limbs is that the soldier who once walked the streets in confidence and power is now cared for like a baby until he can find a way to make things work again.

Give that soldier something he can do for himself *now*â€“a way to express himself, write about his fallen brother, blow out the rage over the violence done to his body and build the courage to face the future that seems so impossible for now. A laptop will do thatâ€“give him confidence, dignity, self-expression, connectedness with those who will help him find a new equilibrium in his world-turned-on-its-head.

Giving out from 30 to 100 laptops per month since June, Valour-IT is in more demand than ever. We literally scraped the bottom of the barrel with our last delivery of laptops, and Soldiersâ€™ Angels has said they cannot allocate any more funds for us until March 2008. We are filling vital gap that the government has missed, but we cannot do it without funding.

Donâ€™t turn your face away from this just because itâ€™s easier to think things are getting better, or because itâ€™s too uncomfortable to think of their suffering while you are whole. They donâ€™t want your pity; just your support. What better way to support them, to show you believe in their recovery and their future than to give them a laptop that they can operate regardless of the depth of their injuries. Please, help us help them.

> I know how much it means to the guys who are stuck lying on their backs, unable to use their hands to so much as scratch. Being fed, bathed, taken care of like an infantÃ¢â‚¬â€• not exactly a fitting role for a warrior whoâ€™s used to being the one who helps others. It sure as hell wasnâ€™t a role that I wanted, although there were many people who came to see me who helpedâ€¦At that time I had no use of either hand. I know how humbling it is, how humiliating it feels. And I know how much better I felt, how amazingly more functional I felt, after Soldiersâ€™ Angels provided me with a laptop and a loyal reader provided me with the software. I canâ€™t wait to do the same, to give that feeling to another soldier at Walter Reed.
>
> â€”Chuck Ziegenfuss, inspiration for Valour-IT

The button is up top center to make a donation.Ã‚ Little donations help, as do big ones.Ã‚ Oh, and pass the word about this program.

Category

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