

Marine Veteran Continues Recovery with Help from Unmet Needs

Terry Snelling turned to the VFW after a devastating medical condition threatened his ability to work

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Terry Snelling, age 34, of Gravette, Ark., was awarded a VFW Unmet Needs grant for his mortgage payment after a devastating medical condition threatened his ability to work.

Snelling served for 16 years in the Marines as an aircraft mechanic, deploying to Afghanistan, Iraq and Kuwait. After retiring early and returning home to wife, Jennie and their three children, Cody, Dustin and Alexa, the unthinkable happened.

Snelling suffered a stroke last November, and as a result lost the use of his left arm and leg. Though currently in rehab, he is still struggling with regaining fine motor skills.

The retirement money Snelling had from the Marine Corps wasn't enough, and he and his family began to worry about the future. "I had been looking for work but have been having a hard time finding anything, since I couldn't draw on my experience as an aircraft mechanic without full use of my left hand," he said.

Snelling is currently in school for mechanical engineering through the VA's Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program, which is a career he could continue to pursue even if he doesn't regain full use of both hands.

After hearing about the Unmet Needs program from a friend and her husband, both former service members, Snelling decided to apply. He then received a grant to help with groceries and his mortgage payment.

"This was one of the single nicest things I've ever received," he expressed. "The money allowed me not to stress about the house, and focus on rehab and school."

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