

Unmet Needs Grant 'Cleared the Fog' for Veteran on the Brink of Eviction

'The financial assistance helped clear the fog so I could see the big picture'

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Torrey Wingate of Rochester, N.Y., joined the United States armed forces after she met an Army recruiter who inspired her to become more. Wingate was first stationed at Fort Lewis, Wash., and went on to serve at Fort Myer, Va. During her time at Fort Myer, Wingate injured her back and knees.

She thrived in the structured routine of her military life, and missed this steadiness and stability when it came time to transition to civilian life. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder made the transition even more challenging. The fear and anxiety she felt took a great toll on her mental health.

Securing a job and leaning on her support system of husband, Todd, and their five children (ranging from 5 to 28 years old) helped smooth her transition.

Her progress came to a sudden halt when her family moved from upstate New York to North Carolina. With the increased cost-of-living and Wingate unable to find a job, they went from a "two-income household to a fraction of one."

She was devastated to see her dreams crumble as her family faced eviction, repossession of their cars, phones disconnected, utilities turned off, and not knowing where their next meal was coming from. "I had applied for public assistance and was denied because we 'made too much' and here we were destitute."

With nowhere else to turn, Wingate began researching for financial assistance and stumbled upon the VFW Unmet Needs grant. "The application process was easy. I was able to take pictures with my phone and attach it all right to the application, all online."

Wingate was approved and it could not have happened at a better time. She was able to get back on track with rent, turn the utilities back on and pay various other bills. With the

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financial burden lifted from her shoulders, Wingate enrolled in school and is currently working on finishing her degree.

“I know what it meant to me to get the assistance. I can only imagine how many other families will benefit from the helping hand. That can’t happen without donations,” she said.

From the brink of eviction to enrolling in college, the VFW Unmet Needs grant “cleared the fog” for Wingate to get her family back on their feet and charge toward a brighter future.