

VFW Covers Expensive Repair for Purple Heart Vet

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Retired Sergeant First Class Brian Livingston joined the Army while still attending high school in small town Grand Island, Neb. in 2000. He wanted to see more of the world, and believed strongly that he had a duty to serve his country.

“It doesn’t matter how long you serve, just that you serve,” he

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said.

Livingston deployed three times to Iraq, and served in Germany, Missouri, Colorado, New Mexico and Washington. He feels he absolutely met his aim of seeing different places and cultures.

Unfortunately, the deployments to Iraq had long-range effects for Livingston's health.

Forever imprinted on Livingston's mind is a day in September of 2004, when his Humvee ran over an anti-tank land mine. The land mine detonated directly under his seat. Livingston's foot was broken, and he was knocked unconscious. He was awarded a Purple Heart for his bravery.

The strife of combat resulted in a TBI from multiple IED explosions, TBI-related migraines, tinnitus, gastrointestinal issues and a degenerative disc disease in his cervical spine. His physical injuries, as well as his PTSD, eventually required him to retire from the service.

Livingston's loving family was always by his side, and now they're keeping his civilian life joyful and busy. He and his wife, Erin, have four children between 8 and 14 years of age: Kalee, Logan, Ryleigh and Adilynn.

An unexpected breakdown of their family vehicle recently threatened their ability to travel to work and school. The sudden vehicle breakdown required a complete rebuild of their transmission, an estimated \$4,000 expense.

Livingston quickly did a Google search to find organizations that provide financial assistance for veterans. He found the VFW Unmet Needs page almost instantly, and started what he describes as a "very easy, streamlined" application process.

Livingston submitted the repair quotes along with basic information about their family through the online application system. Soon, they received the Unmet Needs grant, gifting the vehicle repair and getting their family back on the road.

"The VFW came through and got our vehicle fixed. My wife can go to work, and my kids can keep enjoying the life we've worked so hard for!"

Livingston says, "If you have the power and means to donate to the VFW, do it! The VFW dug my family and I out of a deep hole. Donations keep their finance programs going. There are service members all over the country struggling, and it's amazing to have a place to turn in a time of need."

[Learn more about the VFW's Unmet Needs](#) program's eligibility requirements and apply online today.