



MOSS CREEK MARINES OPERATION HELPING HEROES



**ADOPTED HERO NO. 15
LCpl. COURTNEY HOPKINS
WITH LEONIDAS**



LCpl. Courtney Hopkins

I never know what to write when asked about my medical condition and how this all came about. I either go to into detail where people glaze over and can't keep up with all the information, or I do not get enough info to where it all sounds like a badly written story that does not add up. I hope to make sense of it all, and keep you interested!

I grew up being very physically active. The Marine Corps is what I chose to do at 18, and as much as boot camp sucked, I also really enjoyed it. In Sept of 2000, I was doing the MOT run on family day. About a mile and a half into it, I fell and was in extreme pain. I was told by the docs at medical that I had a partial tear of my right Achilles tendon. After staying on the Island about 6 months, I finally made it to MCT and then of course MOS School. Just before graduation at DINFOS I broke the second toe on my right foot, through the knuckle, requiring surgery for a pin. I had to stay at school, and after I was cleared, I received orders to MCRDPI.

While there for the remaining of my 3.5 years, my unit was more than amazing to me. They kept doing what they could to keep me in as long as they could by placing me on LIMDU and then taking me off only to have me stand duty at the shop while everyone was PTing during the times that I was not in and out of surgeries trying to figure out and fix my pain. The time finally came when my Gunny told me that I was not going to be able to reenlist, so he convinced me to go forward with the medical discharge.

31 December of 2003 was my last day in the Corps. For the next 5 years, I went to multiple appointments over and over again just to be told that everything was all in my head and that my symptoms did not make any sense.

Finally, in 2008, while my husband was stationed at Twenty-nine Palms, I had a break through. I had many falls due to leg weakness and was starting to cause more harm to myself due to not being able to control my legs and their spasms and give outs. Most of this time in 29 I was also home by myself with my then 1-2-year-old son. Poor kid really learned at a very young age that me being a sedentary as possible was a way of life.

The reason that I am wanting a service dog is to help elevate some stress on myself and my family. After extensive conversations with my doctors, we have found that a mobility service dog may give me some small part of my life back. While I will still have flair ups and tough days, we believe that he would make daily living, with a family, easier. Help with loading laundry, bringing in groceries, loading dishwasher, bracing and stability while walking, going and getting someone if I have fallen and can't get up, getting my phone if I don't have it on me and I need to call someone for help. Things like this I think would be an amazing benefit not only for me, but my family of four.

I know this is a horribly long letter. I am sorry if its more than you were expecting or needing.

I thank you for your time and consideration. If for whatever reason this is not an option for me, I do want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for doling what you guys do. I would love to help in any way that I can if ever you need something.