



# SGT. AUNDREY J. SANCHEZ

**Branch of Service: U.S. Army**  
**Years of Service:**  
**February 14, 1995 to March 11, 2004**

# VALENTINE'S DAY

- February 14, 1972
  - My father enlisted in the Army
- February 14, 1995
  - I enlisted in the Army
- February 14, 2003
  - I received notification of deployment to Iraq



# INITIAL FEELINGS

- Surreal
- Anxious
  - Embarking on a new experience
- Saddened
  - Family separation

# HOW MY FAMILY FELT

## Wife

- Proud
  - Serving the country
- Afraid
- Sad
- Lost
  - How would she fill the void.
  - Raising daughter alone

## Parents

- Upset
- Duty
  - Honored that their son was in the war
- Scared
  - Thinking about my welfare.



# PREPARING FOR DEPLOYMENT

- Military and personal equipment
- Prepare will
- Power of Attorney
- Secure finances
- Immunizations
  - Small pox
  - Anthrax
- Inspect soldiers
- Maintain positive outlook
- Cherish moments with family
- Reassure family that I would be ok



## ARRIVING IN KUWAIT



# HOURS BEFORE CROSSING THE BORDER

- Stage vehicles in serial order
- Intel update
  - Activity over last 24 hours in Iraq
  - Keywords used
    - Small arms and snipers
    - IED's (Improved Explosive Devices)
    - RPG's (Rocket Propelled Grenades)
    - Suicide Bombers
    - Rules of engagement
- Safety Briefing
  - Drink water, eat, and rest
  - Last walk around of vehicle
  - Wear seatbelts
  - Vehicle intervals
  - Weapons at the ready
  - Stay alert, stay alive

# HOURS BEFORE CROSSING THE BORDER

- My thoughts and sentiments
  - How would I react to incoming fire?
  - Would I have to kill someone?
  - Am I going to see my family again?
  - I was overwhelmed with anxiousness, which made it difficult to sleep.
  - I felt a strong sense of patriotism and duty.



# FIRST HOURS ON GROUND

- In-processing at Camp Wolf (6 hrs)



# CAMP VICTORY

- Bused to Camp Victory
- Spent 24 hours preparing
  - Met up with rest of unit
  - Repacked and reloaded trucks
  - Maintenance and stage vehicles for convoy to Gunnery site just 8 miles from Kuwait/Iraq border





# IRAQ















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# ■ **FOUR MONTHS IN IRAQ**

# OPERATIONS

- Working long days in the heat





# UNDER ATTACK

- During the day



# UNDER ATTACK

- ...and at night.





# ON THE ROAD

- Convoying everyday for parts pick-ups and maintenance missions.



# REALITIES OF LIFE IN IRAQ

- Privacy was rarely an option





# REALITIES OF LIFE IN IRAQ

- Phone calls home were few and far in between.



# THE IMPACT OF THE MISSION AND REALTIES OF LIFE IN IRAQ

- Frustrated
  - Not knowing when I would return home.
- Worried
  - Am I going to live through this?
  - Is my wife being faithful?



# THE IMPACT OF THE MISSION AND REALTIES OF LIFE IN IRAQ

- Angry
  - Constant loss of soldiers throughout Iraq.
  - Continuous mortar and small arms attacks.
  - Anti-American sentiment.
- Depressed
  - Missing family and comforts of home.
  - Frequent updates of bad news.
  - Sense of being trapped.

# TIME TO GO HOME

- Sad to leave comrades.
- Excited to see family.
- Nervous about what to expect upon return



# READJUSTING TO LIFE

- Reacquaint with spouse and child.
- Family had to readjust to my presence in the home.
- Adjust to American way of life.
- Cope with negative comments from the media and other organizations.

# HOW I CHANGED

- From my wife's point of view:
  - More aggressive
  - Easily angered
  - More demanding
  - More confident
  - More attentive
- My point of view:
  - Short tempered
  - Easily stressed
  - Numerous dreams of being in Iraq
  - New outlook on life
  - More appreciation for family and friends



# OVERCOMING NEGATIVE CHANGES

- Discussion with spouse regarding negative changes.
- Accepted positive and negative changes.
- Identified when negative changes occurred.
- Devise a plan to keep communication channels open.

# A CIVILIAN AGAIN

- Choosing a career path
- Job hunting
- Working with non-military co-workers
- Void of camaraderie
- Civilian organizations not disciplined as the Army
- Internal fight to re-enlist versus continuing life as a civilian



