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I graduated from Oregon Health Science University's (OHSU) Paramedic Program in 1996. After graduation I worked in the OHSU ER for five years and two years with the Office of Rural Health. In my position with the Office of Rural Health I had the opportunity to work closely with Oregon's rural EMS agencies. I gained a great appreciation and respect for the challenge faced by our rural EMS providers.

I am currently the Director of Student Services for the Northwest Regional Training Center's Paramedic program. Working with Paramedic students has proven to be rewarding and challenging. Their enthusiasm for the career keeps me motivated and requires that I stay abreast of new developments in the field.

Three years ago I decided to act on a life long dream of joining the military. I had considered a military career off and on since high school. Lacking a strong role model (so important in the Latino culture) I never took the big step and joined. The last person in my family to serve in the military was my Great-grandfather, who fought for the Union in the Civil War. He joined the New Mexico Volunteers and fought in the Battle of Valverde. As I learned more about my ancestry he became that military role model I had lacked growing up.

I was 38 and the clock was ticking. I knew that if I did not take a chance and take this big step the door to this opportunity would be closed forever. I must have contacted a dozen recruiters until I finally got in touch with a Medical Officer recruiter from the Army. The recruiter worked hard to get me the required waivers and helped me make sense of this very new world. I qualified for a direct commission as a Healthcare Specialist. I am now attached to the 249th Regional Training Institute in Monmouth. My primary focus is



the training of 91W's (Army Medics). Army Medics are now required to become Nationally Registered EMT-B's.

I began drilling and was very impressed with the individuals associated with the Medical Command. I felt very welcomed, and though the experience was still very new to me I seemed to fit right in. I found myself surrounded by individuals, who like me shared many of the same beliefs, motivations, and values. Though initially very nervous about my decision I felt more and more at home with each drill.

Though I had gotten a late start in my military career I was committed to making the most out of my experience. In January of 2004 I left for OBC. My first "real" military experience. I was determined to do my best and make the most out of the experience. I received well-meaning advice from my seniors, and colleagues who had recently attended OBC themselves. **"Don't volunteer for anything!"** was the most frequent and consistent message I heard? Well in the words of Forrest Gump: *"I'm not a smart man."* I did not take me long to find that I had done the exact opposite of the wise advise I had been given. One the first day of OBC I found myself holding the post of Class Leader. Yep - I not only volunteered to take a leadership position, in true Gregg fashion I had gone and taken on the top position. The glamour soon wore off (that took all of 45 minutes) and I spent the next 10 weeks babysitting 232 "adult" medical professionals. The duties of my exalted position included making sure everyone was in the right place at the right time, in the right uniform, sitting up all night at BAMC with soldiers, and responding to the post gate to retrieve soldiers who frequently lost their IDs "somewhere on the River Walk." The experience was exhausting and trying, but it was exactly what I needed to be baptized into the Army family.

I have had many amazing experiences to this point in my Paramedic career but my most recent deployment to New Orleans was certainly more than any of us could have expected! I attended the EMS Expo in New Orleans the week prior to Katrina. I was evacuated just ahead of the storm. I arrived home to learn that my unit had been activated and I was going to be sent right back to Louisiana. I spent a month traveling all over Southern Louisiana. I was the Platoon Leader for the Medical Treatment Team of the 141st Support Battalion. I treated soldiers and civilians in both clinical and field settings.





I have just completed my three-year mark and have had my first promotion. I am very happy I made the decision to join and I look forward to a long and rewarding career. I have to thank the many individuals who have taken the time to mentor and guide me. Great thanks are also due to my wonderful wife and family. They have made many sacrifices in order for me to be successful in this role.