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Letter To Co-Workers From War Hero's Brother Inspires Big "Care Package" To Soldiers Overseas

The holidays will be a little merrier for US Army unit in Afghanistan with care package from Atlantic Coast Media Group

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -- Jersey City, NJ, December 23, 2010 – Jersey City's Naeem Syed has spent many Christmases without his brother Derrick, who has been deployed overseas in Iraq then Afghanistan. So this year Naeem wrote a letter to his co-workers at Atlantic Coast Media Group (ACMG) asking them to help send a message to his brother and others who are defending our country instead of celebrating the holidays with their families.

The letter contained a wish list of over 60 different items for a care package to be sent to his brother's unit, everything from sticks of gum to disposable cameras to long underwear and canned sardines.

ACMG's Co-founder /CEO Andrew Surwilo, a military veteran, immediately supported the campaign and adopted it as a companywide project, "We were glad that Naeem reached out to the ACMG family with his brother's story. It's important to remember that not everyone will enjoy the company of their families during this holiday season and if we can help our soldiers feel a little bit of home, we certainly should." By the time the package was mailed to the members of Captain Syed's unit in Afghanistan, almost every one of the items requested went into the package, sometimes in twos and threes.

Captain Derrick N. Syed of Jersey City is on his 7th assignment with the US Army. He was wounded by sniper fire in Sadr City, Baghdad in 2007 but rejoined his unit just four months later. For his bravery, he was awarded a Purple Heart and the Bronze Star and was given the Key to Jersey City by Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy in 2008.

Naeem Syed wanted to be sure that military men and women like his brother would not be forgotten over this holiday season. His letter read in part, "Having spent most of my adult years not being able to see my brother because he was always away, essentially protecting his little brother, I thought it would be a good idea to give back to those heroic people that keep us safe and allow them to enjoy their holiday the same way we all will."

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Naeem Syed's full letter to his colleagues is below.

ACMG Family,

My name is Naeem Syed and I have been with ACMG for approximately one month. You folks may not know me or may have seen me around, but this is not the reason as to why I am writing this letter. Every day we get up and carry on with our daily routines and are easily able to do so due to the freedom that we are provided. However, in doing so, we really forget the men and women of the United States Armed Forces that risk their lives each and every day fighting for the freedom that we sometimes take for granted. A tiny suggestion turned into a big idea and I would like to take this time out to tell you my story.

My older brother, Captain Derrick N. Syed of the United States Army is currently on his 6th or 7th (I lost count) tour of duty right now in Afghanistan. He enlisted in 1997 and has been serving our country ever since. Starting out in the Army reserves, and quickly working his way up the ranks with numerous promotions, my brother had then become a Drill Instructor for the Army a few years after. He has also completed both training schools to be a part of the elite Army Rangers as well as Airborne school to have the distinct honor of being called an Airborne Infantry soldier.

An American of Pakistani/Cuban decent, he served in the United States Army as the Second Platoon Leader for D/2-325 Airborne Infantry Regiment in Baghdad from January 4, 2007 to May 23, 2007. He then served in the Battalion S-3 Air from November 1, 2007 through April 1, 2008. He was deployed with his platoon to the outskirts of Sadr City until being wounded during a combat patrol.

At the time he was an infantry platoon leader with the 82nd Airborne Division when he was shot and wounded by a sniper in Baghdad. After being transported to a combat support hospital, the 1st Cavalry Division Sergeant Major presented my brother with the Purple Heart. He returned to the States where he would only recover for four months before voluntarily heading back to Iraq to complete his tour of duty. I always ask him if he was going back to try and find the guy that wounded him! Shortly after, the United States Army then decided to award my brother the Bronze Star. In my opinion, the Medal of Honor was really what he and every soldier that fight for our freedom should be receiving on a daily basis!

Having spent most of my adult years not being able to see my brother because he was always away, essentially protecting his little brother, I thought it would be a good idea to give back to those heroic people that keep us safe and allow them to enjoy their holiday the same way we all will. I would like to get a care package together on behalf of ACMG and send it to Afghanistan to my brothers' unit so that we can let him and his men know that we are thinking of them and that even though they are out of sight, they are never out of mind.

When my brother was awarded Key to the City, Mayor Jerramiah Healy stated, "It is important that jersey City recognizes the sacrifices that our war heroes unselfishly have made and continue to make so that we can enjoy our freedom, in honoring this young man for his bravery, we are also paying homage to all those who have served our country." I do not think I could have said it any better. My brother is my best friend, my mentor, and has always been my guardian. The same way he and EVERY soldier in the armed forces fight for me, they fight for you as well, so please join me to give back.

Thank you for your time and attention,

Naeem Syed