

To: The Law Firm of Puckett & Faraj, PC
From: HM1 (FMF) Benjamin E. Swanson
CC: Mary Jo Provenzano
Date: 1/26/2012
Re: Character Statement for Travis L. Wilridge

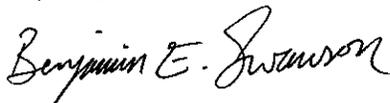
Character Statement

I, Benjamin E. Swanson, have known Travis L. Wilridge since 01DEC2004. I came off of TAD orders to work at Fischer Medical Clinic. We worked together in sickcall one month before deploying and during that time, he quickly earned my trust in his abilities as a Hospital Corpsman. While deployed to Iraq, we were assigned to brother companies until he was picked to serve in our Weapons Platoon, Lima Company which berthed next to me in 2nd Platoon. During his time with Weapons, his performance was exemplary and displayed knowledge and conduct above his paygrade. Before reporting to Lima Company, he was attached to India Company and endured concussions due to incoming mortar rounds impacting around and on the Battalion Aid Station in Hit. He woke to find the building in shambles and that the blast had thrown him across the room. Ignoring his pain, he quickly assessed other Corpsmen for injuries, stabilized them, and assisted in their medical evacuation for further assessment and treatment. Of the five injured in the BAS, he was the only one that didn't receive the Purple Heart because he was not medically evacuated.

We became closer through the death of his mentor and my peer, Travis Youngblood. Travis and I speak of him often. Through our deployment, we were in countless firefights for which he spoke of his troubles sleeping and having vivid nightmares. When we returned from Iraq, we went back to work at the clinic. I was Travis's Asst. Leading Petty Officer and in short time became his Leading Petty Officer. He would talk to me about his counseling sessions and his struggle with PTSD; though it never affected his quality of work. After carefully watching all of the Sickcall Corpsmen, I chose Travis as my ALPO because he was exceptional in his medical and professional abilities. He was my go-to-guy, able to handle anything in my absence with full confidence. We worked together all week and would go do something either after work or on the weekends. Now that he's out of the Navy, we schedule time to do family events and parties. Our professional and personal friendship blends well and continues to. We've cut our teeth in battle together and became brothers forever.

Travis L. Wilridge continually sets the example as a sailor, citizen, and friend.

Very respectfully,



HM1(FMF) Benjamin E. Swanson, USN