

A Marine's Wish to Thank His Wife for Standing by His Side

July 6, 2010

WISH #42

San Diego, CA



We've seen time and time again that many of the sacrifices made by our military are actually made by the spouses and family waiting for their loved ones to return home. The following wish was requested by a Marine who understands and appreciates those sacrifices.

Dustin Manness has been in the USMC for 2 years. During that time, he has been based in Okinawa, Japan, and traveled to Thailand, Mt. Fuji, Townsville, Australia, and Brisbane, Australia. His duties have been to work with foreign militaries to enhance their artillery skills and perfect their overall ability to perform in battle. Currently, he is stationed at Camp Pendleton, where he is a part of an artillery battery. Most of his training takes place in the fields of Camp Pendleton, in Twentynine Palms, or in the desert.

As a result of Dustin's deployment, he has missed many family events including his wife Nicole's pregnancy, the birth of their son Christian, as well as Nicole's Great-Grandmother's death and funeral, not to mention Nicole's past 2 birthdays, and Mother's day this year.

Dustin and Nicole have been together since Nicole's Junior Prom in 2005. They married in June 2008 and Nicole gave up everything from a relationship with her parents, to funding for college, to leaving a full-time job in order to be closer to Dustin. In August (2008), she and Dustin received news they were expecting their first child, so Nicole moved from Oklahoma to California. Unfortunately, she quickly found that the job market was less-than flourishing in California, and she was not able to find work. This was also when the couple would face Dustin's first deployment. By the time Dustin deployed to Japan, Nicole was five months pregnant and out of work, so she decided to move back home.

In August of 2009, Dustin returned from deployment and Nicole returned to California. With the arrival of Christian, and Nicole still looking for work, the Manness' live on a very tight budget. On the whole, Nicole and Dustin's life together has been difficult, most of which is a result of military life. They have little left over each month for fun times together or dates. Dustin discovered *Wish For Our Heroes* during the Pepsi Refresh Project campaign, and contacted the foundation indicating he wanted to give Nicole something to show his appreciation for everything she has given up for him.. In his words, ***"I want my love to know how much I respect her for standing by my side through all of this, and I want her to know that if I had all the money in the world I would give her anything she wanted. And right now she wants to be with her family more than anything in the world."*** His wish was to send Nicole from San Diego to Pennsylvania to visit her family.

To show our appreciation for the sacrifices they've both made for our country, Wish For Our Heroes was able to provide 2 round trip tickets (little Christian will fly for free in his parents' laps) and a rental car during their stay. Nicole will get that visit with her family, Dustin and Nicole will get some quality time to themselves, and both Nicole and Dustin's family (both live in Pennsylvania) will get to meet and enjoy little Christian.

Dustin and Nicole, we deeply appreciate the sacrifices you make every day for our freedom. We wish you and your family the best.

