

Thank You for Your Service



As we prepare to celebrate Veterans Day, my husband Nick and I look forward to a very special phone call that we get—a call from our oldest son, Nicholas, an active duty Air Force Captain.

Nicholas calls my husband, a 23-year Army and Desert Storm veteran, and my father, also a 23-year Army and Vietnam veteran, on Veterans Day. No matter where he is, if he can call, Nicholas does.

He gets it.

He understands the long days, sleepless nights, hardships, fear, loss, missed holidays and family events, frequent moves, and the challenges that come with the calling to serve in our military forces. He thanks his dad, and his PopPop for their service.



Our beautiful family.

As with most Veterans, Nick appreciates being recognized for his service, but frankly, he would still be serving if he could. He loved it that much—all of it! The soldiers that he served with made ALL the “hard stuff” worth it, and the memories, relationships and experiences garnered over his career are cherished. Being a military family, and having two Army “brats” are what we are most proud of!

When Nick was commissioned in 1981, I knew, being an Army brat myself, the challenges that came with being a military family. Long separations and frequent uprooting, as well as living overseas, were things that I experienced. What I guess we didn’t know, and soon experienced, were the connections to others that made it all possible. When you are all “in the same boat,” as the saying goes, you figure out ways to succeed and make the best of the situation, no matter how difficult or unfortunate. Those connections and that shared experience not only helped us in our military life, but they are invaluable as we navigate our life with MS.

Nick was diagnosed with MS 20 years ago. And although Nick can’t put on his uniform anymore, he takes the opportunity to engage with fellow Veterans any chance he gets. He is “that guy” at the VA hospital; who will strike up a conversation with anyone, and if you are wearing a hat that designates your service affiliation, that is even better! He will listen to other Veterans tell their stories all day, which is so important. As always, those military bonds run deep!

We have met numerous veterans with MS, and they inspire us and show us the possibilities and ways to navigate through the difficult times. We also find ways to celebrate successes and share information and resources. We value, nurture and seek out those relationships, because together we are stronger!

Nick has secondary progressive MS, and has no use of his legs, limited core strength and struggles with most aspects of daily living. His military experience has proven to him that he has the guts, drive and resilience to get through each day, and the support that he gets from his family, military friends and MS friends certainly reinforce his courage in that daily fight.

This Veterans Day, please keep all those who have served, and those who are currently serving, in your thoughts and prayers. They are the reason for the freedoms that we sometimes take for granted; they have done so much and ask so little in return. And for our Veterans dealing with challenges like MS; keep moving forward and know that you are not alone! And if you need someone to talk to, you can always [reach out to us](#).

Editor's Note: For resources and more information about veterans with multiple sclerosis, [visit our website](#).