

# 'We Remember' In Need of Funds

WHEELING — Representatives from the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps on Wednesday called upon Upper Ohio Valley residents to consider making a financial donation to the "We Remember" campaign, which benefits severely wounded military personnel recovering in Iraq, Afghanistan and Germany.

The campaign, announced last week, will raise funds to purchase "comfort items" for the wounded, including socks, T-shirts, sweat pants, jersey shorts, shoes, pillows and other items either not provided or difficult to obtain. The campaign is sponsored by the West Virginia High Technology Consortium Foundation and Main Street Bank.

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Justin Florida and U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Justin O'Shaughnessy, both veterans of combat, issued their plea for public support of the campaign during a news conference held at Main Street Bank. The two men currently are assigned to the Armed Forces recruiting office in Wheeling.

Florida, who served several tours overseas, said that during combat he saw comrades wounded, and waited with them until medical personnel arrive.

He said the ordeal is extremely traumatic.

"Can you imagine how it makes a wounded soldier feel when he or she receives letters or packages? They're

in a hospital far from their military family and their real family back home. It can get lonely and they're usually spending most of their time in their hospital room. Receiving a letter or package from home is something they will never forget," said Florida, a native of Cranberry, Pa.

"It touches them deeply knowing that they have not been forgotten by the folks back home. The 'We Remember' campaign provides a great opportunity for local residents to show them that they still care."

O'Shaughnessy, who participated in Operation Enduring Freedom, said serving his nation is a great personal pleasure and receiving support from "back home" makes it all worthwhile.

"When you're overseas, anything received reminds us that everyone cares. It's not so much what they receive, but more that someone took the time to send it that really counts. That's such a morale booster," noted O'Shaughnessy.

Joseph Allen, WVHTC Foundation vice president and general manager, said the campaign has received a favorable response from the community.

"Shortly after we announced the campaign last Friday, Main Street Bank began receiving donations. Very often these young men and women only have hospital garb and little in the way of other clothing. The campaign will help boost their morale and make them feel more comfortable as they continue their long recovery process," commented Allen.

Local residents can drop off or mail their contribution to Main Street Bank, 2001 Main St., Wheeling, WV 26003. Checks should be payable to: We Remember/Main Street Bank. The campaign is being held in conjunction with the Landstuhl Hospital Care Project, Stafford, Va., which purchase the items for the military personnel.

**"When you're overseas, anything received reminds us that everyone cares. It's not so much what they receive, but more that someone took the time to send it that really counts."**

U.S. Marine Corps Sgt.  
Justin O'Shaughnessy



Photo by Scott McCloskey

Staff Sgt. Justin Florida with the U.S. Army Recruiting Station in Wheeling makes a few comments at a press conference Wednesday in the lobby of Main Street Bank about the "We Remember" campaign.

*Intelligencer 5/25/06*