

FROM: Ed and Kathy Colley

We thank you for your incredible generosity.

We have been very fortunate to have attended several T*A*P*S events since losing our son four years ago. These events, hosted by the most caring people one could ever hope to meet, are done with great care, compassion, and respect.

One amazing aspect of the support that T*A*P*S provides is their willingness to serve the needs of so many, such as siblings, fiances, and "battle buddies," unconstrained by strict governmental rules and regulations. This flexibility comes directly from the generous support of individuals and corporations.

Allow me to illustrate this point by contrasting it to the support we received through the government just after Stephen's death. Stephen's widow wished that he be buried in Texas, many hundreds of miles from his family of origin. Government rules provided for travel to the burial site for this fallen warrior's parents, but not his siblings. Taps was played, but five brothers and sisters were not there to hear.

Because of contributions like yours, Stephen's siblings, most of whom were still in college or high school, have been able to attend T*A*P*S events that they would not have otherwise been able to afford.

We noticed something similar at the very end of the evening yesterday that was likely missed by many in the room. The very moving, and powerful, presentation by the "Fallen Warrior's Project," honored the loss of a grandmother who had clearly filled the maternal role in the young soldier's life. Private funding allows such logic and compassion.

We have attended many Veterans' Day events over the years. Land of the Free Foundation's event was the nicest, and most impactful, we have ever attended. We are grateful for the invitation.

Of course, nothing we could say or do would repay the smallest fraction of the great good your foundation's work does. But, we would like to offer what little we can. If, at any future date, you could use our voice in any way, we would be honored to help.

Your work does so much to highlight the sacrifices made by the men and women of our military who stand on the front lines to defend the Land of the Free. But too few recognize the value of our great economic engine, driven by the business leaders and entrepreneurs that your foundation represents. It is certainly not "lost" on us that the men and women who collectively donated One Million Dollars to support our warriors and their families, made these donations after also providing a much larger sum with their tax dollars to fund the best equipped, best trained, and most technologically advanced military ever fielded in the history of warfare. As a direct result of these

advantages, fewer Soldiers die, fewer Marines are disfigured, and more Seamen return home safely.

A small suggestion: Buy a television station ... and a newspaper. The popular press is simply blind to the fact that the much maligned Capitalist already carries far more than their fair share of the load in making this great country what it is. And then, you are willing to impose on your friends to give even more.

Leaders like the three of you, and your contributors, will become even more important in the next decade or two. As we begin to wind down our foreign entanglements, many civilians will pay less attention to the lingering costs from the scars and losses. Your promise to help others to never forget will only gain in importance.

As we think about how your gifts, past and present, have helped to dull the debilitating pain of our grief, a tear trickles down our cheek. These tears of gratitude remind us that we are not alone.

Thank you,
Ed and Kathy Colley
Parents of Stephen E. Colley, PFC, US Army (Died 16 May 2007)