



Retired Wounded Warrior Interviewed on Computer Electronic Accommodation Program

MCICOM's Aaron Helstrom Explains to NBC4 How Program Has Helped Him

ARLINGTON, Va. Mr. Aaron Helstrom of Marine Corps Installation Command (MCICOM) was recently interviewed by NBC4 in Washington, D.C. about his participation in the Computer/Electronic Accommodation Program (CAP). The story aired on Wednesday, April 2, 2014 to a local audience.

The Federal program "provides assistive technology (AT) and reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities [including] wounded Service members," so they have greater opportunity for employment within the Department of Defense (DoD) and larger Federal government.

Helstrom, a retired Marine, is one such beneficiary. In 2003, he was serving in Iraq when a blast wounded him in his left shoulder, and injured his left leg so severely doctors told him he would not walk again. He was a husband with two children at home.

Helstrom spoke to NBC4 about the challenges facing injured service members: "Why do so many [wounded veterans who are] young, enlisted, [with] no college degree give up hope? Because they think, 'I can't work. I can't do anything. I can't provide for my family, so now I'm worthless.' But CAP tech comes and they provide this assistance to you that makes you say, 'Really? I can go back to school. I can work. You have something that can help me remember my day?' It's amazing."

He is now MCICOM's Military Transportation Program Manager. CAP provides him with a pen that records meetings while he takes notes, and a computer lift that allows him to stand at the keyboard rather than sitting which can become painful.

Helstrom's interview raises awareness of the assistance program, and he hopes it will encourage wounded warriors to take advantage of it. "It will definitely bring some emotion to the piece [on CAP] and make it connect with viewers."

NBC News Story: <http://www.nbcwashington.com/video/#!/news/local/Program-Helps-Wounded-Warriors-Transition-to-Workforce/253658841>

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