

# *Postcards from Iraq*

## **Proud to be Part of This Mission**

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When I first received notification that I would be deploying to Iraq, I was reluctant because all I could think about was being separated from my friends, my home and most of all my family. Once I arrived in country, I realized that I had to step out of the box and not limit myself by only thinking of my circumstances.

I knew if I only thought about being away from home, this would be an extremely long deployment. Now that I'm here I've recognized the differences that we're making and the lives of the Iraqi people that are being changed because of our efforts. Everyone on ground here had to make that extra effort to step out of the box, by helping to make progress for the Iraqi people. I'm happy that I'm part of this effort and I'm honored to serve in this mission with the Corps of Engineers.

One effort I've been apart of during my deployment is assisting with packing school supplies and toys for the children. I have two children of my own and when I went home for Christmas and watched my kids open their Christmas gifts I thought of the excitement the Iraqi children must have felt when they received the supplies and toys.

We often take the simple things in life for granted at home, but knowing how unfortunate these children are and to think how the American people go above and beyond by sending these supplies for the children is very humbling to say the least. Among the many projects the Corps of Engineers has accomplished here in Iraq is providing better schools and hospitals. Before this was done, most of the children here had to attend mud schools and didn't get the proper medical care they needed.

In my heart I feel like I have contributed and gave my best to helping rebuild a better Iraq. Now that my tour is coming to an end, I can honestly say this has been a rewarding experience for me and one that I will never forget. Esayons!



**Staff Sgt. Jessica W. Harvey, working with the USACE, Gulf Region South District in An Nasiriyah, Iraq. (USACE PHOTO BY MOHAMMED ALIWI).**