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12th Grade

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High School

As a military child I have been surrounded by a lot of soldiers and veterans throughout my life. But one person I have come to respect and can proudly call him my hero is Richard Coffman, otherwise known as my Grandfather. My grandfather is someone I have come to respect and call my hero because he fought for his country, he helped to save lives during the war, and he dedicated his life to service.

My grandfather had been in the Army for eight years before the start of the Vietnam war. He had previously fought in the Korean War as an enlisted soldier for two years finishing off as a first sergeant. After his tour he went back to get a college degree and came back into the Army as an officer. Not only had he served his country in one war, he made the decision to go back into the army to further continue serving his country. Richard did a total of two tours in Vietnam. In his first tour he was the SubSector advisor to the Vietnamese Army. He would work with with the Vietnamese Army and he would teach them strategies and how to fight against the enemy. In his second job he was commander of 2nd Squadron 11th ACR, which is now located where i live now, the National Training Center. My grandfather helped not only our country fight he also helped the Vietnamese army to become a better army. He was always willing to help people even if he was hurt.

While in Vietnam my Grandfather was injured in both of his tours. During his first tour he was shot in the leg and was forced to be sent home back to the states. During his recovery he was on crutches for a whole year and had a long and painful recovery. During my grandfather's second tour, he was flying in a helicopter as the troops made their way to Cambodia when they thought they saw enemy fire and decided to fly down to check it out. That is where the enemy turned on them and shot down the helicopter. Even though he was badly injured, my grandfather

worked to save his men and endangered himself just so he could save other people's lives. When they finally flew him back to the states, he was being pulled on a gurney where he was meeting my Dad and my Grandmother. He made the men wheeling him stop and said "I am going to walk to see my son". He had injured both of his arms and was in the hospital for two years recovering. During this time he could not do anything by himself, he could not eat, go to the bathroom, or even read a book. Although my grandfather had every right to be grouchy, rude, and just plain old mean he was anything but that. He was so kind and was always worried about others over himself. After the war was over, because of his actions he was awarded the Purple Heart, Bronze Star Dollar with V device for valor, Silver Star, and the Distinguished Service Medal.

My grandfather dedicated his life to service. Even after he was injured in the war twice he still continued to serve in the army for total of 33 years. After he retired, he still played an influential role in the Army and helped in anyway he could. Although I can not tell him this now I hope he knows how proud of him I am and how much his bravery has influenced me and caused me to be a better person.

Richard Coffman is someone I have come to respect and call my hero because he fought for his country, he helped to save lives during his Vietnam tours, and he dedicated his life to service. Although my Grandfather was a hero, I will always remember him as my Grandfather making me root beer floats.