



Name: Rachel Tanham, Mother of Corpsman Nicholas Tognazzi

Title: Director of Customer Service

Location: Arizona

Military Branch: Navy

Military Rank: Corpsman

Service Dates: December 2014-Present



When our youngest son, Nicholas Tognazzi, joined the Navy in December of 2014, we felt a sense of pride as parents. But as a Mom, I spent most of his life protecting him and keeping safe and now he was going to be potentially putting himself in harm's way for our country.

Your life changes when a family member joins the military. As a military parent you will dive across the room when you get a call from your soldier, even if that call is just for a minute. You're always hoping to hear the words, "I'm ok". You tear up when the National Anthem plays. You hug them extra tight when they come home. You are careful on what you post on social media. You get focused so the fear does not take over and most of all, you find ways to show your support.

I joined several groups for support, such as the Blue Start Mom Group. They mail out countless care packages to military bases around the world accompanied by handwritten letters of encouragement. We hold the hands of scared family members whose child or spouse is going into a dangerous situation and we attend funerals for those we have lost.

At work, I am part of the ARG VALOR. We organize events like flag placements on graves for Memorial Day, Veteran's Day and on the 4th of July. We support local fund raising events for military families, run races to show our support and serve meals on base during the holidays when service men and women cannot go home to be with their families. We brainstorm ways we can do more.

I am extremely grateful to work for a company that shares this pride. RNDC displays it on the side of our trucks, and it shows in the veterans we hire. I appreciate the resource groups we formed and the support we get when we come to leaders with an idea on how we can better support or military.

As Nick's mom, my hearts swell with pride knowing Nick is fulfilling his calling and is one of America's finest.