

A Letter of Appreciation—January 2012

To my friends at BUMC,

First, let me thank you from the bottom of my heart for the prayers, support, cards and goodies you have sent my way. There are days when I do something as monotonous as walk down the sidewalk and my hearts starts racing with joy and happiness, and I know that someone back home is thinking about me or sending a prayer for my safety. With every card I receive, I am amazed at the kindness of strangers. Some days here are harder than others, and when I begin to feel down or lonely, I look at the notes on my wall and realize that even though others are facing hard times and struggles in their lives, they have taken the time to write and encourage me to fulfill my mission over here. It motivates me to reach out to others in my unit who are also having a bad day.



Let me also thank you for supporting my mother during my deployment. Sometimes it indeed is the family back home that needs the support more than the Soldier, and I appreciate people rallying around her during this difficult year. She never lets me forget how proud she is of me, and my brother and sister, too, who are also serving in the military. I know she had her doubts when all of us joined the military, but she stood by us and eventually realized what terrific opportunities we were exposed to and what a sense of patriotism we feel. She helped to stand up a Blue Star Mother chapter in her area, and I am so proud of her for her commitments! The Lord is helping to connect us by way of music in singing His praises, and I get goosebumps in church when I hear a song that I know she has sung in the choir.

Today I received a letter from the Congregational Care Team quoting Jeremiah 29:11, talking about the plans that the Lord has made for me. This verse was the inspiration for a song that my daughter, turning six years old tomorrow, learned at Vacation Bible School in Okinawa, and reading the letter instantly brought back memories of her singing along to the CD at the top of her lungs from the backseat as we drove to and from the Army chapel. I haven't heard the song in over a year, so I was able to conduct an internet search and found a video made by another VBS using the same soundtrack, and it was a great break just to sit back and let the Lord's music fill my heart while memories of my family filled my thoughts. Truly, the Lord has plans for me here, and while I miss my family immensely, I know that it is important to fulfill not only the Army's missions, but God's mission, too.

As for my missions here, I am assigned to a criminal investigation office. We are a small, but tightly knit group of Soldiers who investigate felony level crimes, either committed by military members, contractors, or civilians working for the military. Sometimes we look into cases involving folks from other counties, too. The work can be demanding at times, but can also be rewarding when we see justice served. There is some traveling, and I pray every day for travel mercies when my guys are headed to the helicopters. I absolutely love my job, and I feel a real sense of purpose when an investigation wraps up and the bad guy is released from the Army.

Thank you again for the overwhelming support you have shown me, my family, and my fellow Soldiers. Words alone cannot begin to say how appreciative I am.



Love,
Jennifer Pellegrini

Jennifer is the daughter of Kim Isler and is currently serving our country in Afghanistan. Her husband and three children, ages 6, 14, and 16 anxiously await her return.