



Information and Technology Branch (ITB)

Communications and Outreach Unit (COU) News
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ITB, FBI Roll Up Sleeves for Troops

FBI Information and Technology Branch Communications and Outreach Unit

WASHINGTON, March 28, 2008—*The U.S. Armed Services Blood Program (ASBP) conducted a blood drive today here at the FBI Headquarters Building. By day's end, nearly 200 FBI agents and support professionals had rolled up their sleeves to support the men and women in our nation's military. Yet what appeared to the untrained eye as a simple blood drive actually was the result of a behind-the-scene worldwide network of volunteers, a series of seemingly unrelated events on three continents, and two dedicated FBIHQ personnel connecting it all together.*

It all began last August when Matt Dick, a contractor with the FBI, was contacted by Ms. Patti Patton-Bader, the founder of "Soldier's Angels"—a non-profit group that supports U.S. Soldiers deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. At the time, Matt was training for the Marine Corps Marathon as a member of Team Fisher House. Matt had become a volunteer in 2005 for Soldier's Angels after he had read an article in the *Washington Post* about how this California-based organization, founded by the grandniece of General George S. Patton—yes, *that* General Patton—was using creative networking, volunteerism, and available resources to support our troops any way they could—from making blankets for the wounded to providing foster care for pets of the deployed to seeking corporate sponsorships of entire units. He contacted the group and soon became another member of the group's vast worldwide network of volunteers.

In her call, Patti explained that a team of Army Rangers had been on patrol in the mountains of Afghanistan, gathering information and verifying intelligence about insurgent activities. Suddenly, they were surrounded and attacked. In the seven-hour firefight that followed, two members of the unit were killed, including the captain who commanded their unit. Seven more were wounded. Because of the bravery and training exhibited by the unit, the captain was promoted posthumously to major.

She went on to explain how a young lieutenant and three wounded comrades were escorting their major's body to Arlington National Cemetery but had no dress uniforms for the funeral. Patti needed someone in the D.C. area to act as a go-between with the lieutenant and Soldier's Angels. "Can you help?" Matt's response was an unequivocal "yes." Soon Soldier's Angels was wiring funds to Matt, who then met the lieutenant near FBI Headquarters.

Connecting the Dots. Matt asked FBI employee Scott Robinson if he knew of offices within the FBI that would benefit from listening to the lieutenant's first-hand account of a firefight in Afghanistan, to "connect the dots" if you will. Scott suggested the Directorate of Intelligence. Matt then asked the lieutenant if he'd come speak to our intelligence analysts here at FBIIHQ. During his visit, the lieutenant painted a vivid picture of the firefight just 12 days earlier, validating for them the importance of the Bureau's overall national security mission. Scott, Matt, and several FBI personnel attended the major's memorial service and burial.

Returning the gift. By coincidence, or maybe not, Scott, a volunteer firefighter, was at his station one evening and learned the military was desperately short of blood. Members of the station were banding together to donate blood at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. Scott and Matt suggested the FBI hold a blood drive. The two reached out to the ASBP and the Department of Defense, both of which enthusiastically lent their time and expertise to planning an event for the last week in March.

According to Scott, 189 donors participated, setting a new ASBP record. "Off-site blood drives typically attract 50 to 60 donors," he said. "We had a total of 112 actual draws—yielding 95 units of useable blood. That translates into 285 lives that could potentially be saved. And with teams of our own personnel rotating in and out of Iraq and Afghanistan, the lives of FBI employees could well be among the hundreds saved," he noted.

ASBP director, Navy Commander Michael C. Libby was impressed by the FBI's compassion and call to duty. "We thank the FBI for your generous support, which is both welcome and heartwarming," he said. "Be assured the military blood program will be there to sustain and save the lives of those working alongside our troops, here at home and in the field and wherever may be injured in the line of duty."

ASBP blood drives are held periodically at the Reagan Building in Washington, D.C., at 1300 Pennsylvania Ave. To find an ASBP blood drive near you, log on to www.militaryblood.dod.mil.