



BROTHERS **IN** ARMS

One Sugar Land Family's Legacy of Service

Written by Crystal Rawls Photos by Nneka Kimble



Ben Lukomski and his fellow soldiers are proud of the work they do



Devin Lukomski is inducted into Phi Theta Kappa at the New Mexico Military Institute

Heart pounding, mom Marilyn Lukomski waited for news from her son, Captain Benjamin Lukomski, who was stationed at Fort Hood. She had just learned of the tragic shooting of several soldiers on base that pulled at the heartstrings of the nation. She called her husband, David, and younger sons, Devin and Alex, poured over news sites, and prayed with co-workers. “Denial is the first thing that goes through your mind,” she says. “I felt inside that I knew he was okay. I just had to wait until he could contact me.” Ben finally sent his parents a text message simply saying, “OK.”

Making a Positive Impact

After completing three tours of duty in four years, Ben has faced dangerous situations before, leaving his family worrying about his safety. “He’s had some very close calls while deployed,” says Marilyn. “But this time included the horrifying fact that this was happening at home and it shouldn’t be.”

Despite the difficult sacrifice of saying goodbye to loved ones and facing life-threatening situations, Ben has never wavered in his motivation to serve, spurred on by the positive impact the soldiers make in war-torn areas. “Whether it’s teaching Afghan police leadership, making an area safer for the locals, or having lunch with a village elder, it’s all very rewarding work,” he says.

Inspiring His Brothers to Follow

Ben’s commitment and love of his work has inspired brothers, Devin, 19, and Alex, 17, to follow his lead and pursue successful military careers. “My older brother was the whole

reason that I wanted to join NJROTC, and I couldn’t be happier about the fact that he influenced that decision,” says Devin, an inspector general in his second year at New Mexico Military Institute and former executive officer of the Austin High School Navy Junior ROTC. “The more I get involved with the military, though, the more my love for the military grows.” He will commission as a second lieutenant in April, continue with college, and wants to have a career in the U.S. Army Aviation Corps.

A senior at Austin High School, Alex felt compelled to serve as his brothers did and became involved with NJROTC as a freshman, serving now as the cadet commanding officer of the unit. He also wants to attend NMMI and plans on serving as an army surgeon. “Since before I was even able to fully comprehend the vast study of medicine, I have been fascinated by it,” Alex says. “However, when I got to high school and became involved in NJROTC, I became more and more interested in the military lifestyle. Also, with one brother on a fast track to becoming an officer and another who is already a successful officer in the army, I decided that I would like to carry on the legacy.”

Strengthening Family Ties

The Lukomskis remain a close-knit family strengthened by their love for one another and love for their country. “[We] know that the best thing parents and loved ones can do to support their soldiers is to take care of business at home,” David says. “Allow them to focus on their jobs and never put them in a position of distraction or worry over things they

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“I figured I could either watch the world change around me, or be a part of that change and help steer it.”

- Captain Benjamin Lukomski

Ben Lukomski earned a Bronze Star for his service in Operation Iraqi Freedom

can do little to influence. This is the most important thing you can do, along with providing encouragement and support.”

David and Marilyn’s eyes light up when they talk about their sons. Pride is an understatement for these parents. “You might ask, ‘Why did all three boys from this one family choose to go in this direction?’ The way we see it, they are building their own tradition,” David says. “They made a decision to be part of the Junior ROTC program in high school and took this decision very seriously. Our boys recognize the value of the program and have embraced the core values of honor, courage, and commitment.” If you have an inspiring story to share about a Sugar Land soldier, email editor@sugarlandmagazine.com. SLM

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David, Ben, Devin, Alex, and Marilyn Lukomski are strengthened by their love of country

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