

# HEROES

Each week the Defense Dept. highlights the military men and women who have gone above and beyond in the global war on terror.



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## Navy Petty Officer Third Class Joshua Chiarini

As enemy forces ambushed the front of his convoy, and with explosions going off on the road ahead of him, Navy Hospital Corpsman Joshua Chiarini could have remained in his vehicle and waited for the action to pass. Instead, the petty officer bolted from his truck and joined the battle. His ensuing gallantry resulted in a Silver Star and the recovery of several wounded Marines from the line of fire, saving their lives.

Many of Chiarini's missions took place in Al Anbar province, a hotbed of violence in early 2006. The morning of February 10 started out like so many others – with a patrol for Chiarini, a combat medic spending his third tour of duty with the 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division. It soon became clear the day would be anything but routine. A roadside bomb hit the front Humvee in the convoy. The vehicle sped out of the kill zone and its occupants escaped and took up defensive positions against the attacking force. A second blast detonated in the area where the four Marines and one interpreter stood, which was followed by heavy small-arms fire in their direction, causing injuries. Chiarini's Humvee, the third in the convoy, remained far behind the damaged truck and Marines. Clouds of smoke and nonexistent radio communications blocked the pinned down Marines from the rest of the convoy. Realizing his comrades lay in harm's way, Chiarini jumped out of the truck and sprinted 100 meters to tend to the injured men, dodging insurgent fire the entire way.



Coventry, RI  
*Silver Star recipient*

One by one, Chiarini helped guide each person to safety. Chiarini led the interpreter, who had a mangled arm, to a secure Humvee. He guided the M-16 fire of a blinded Marine toward the insurgents. Chiarini then made three separate trips from the Humvee to the battlefield to treat and retrieve each of the wounded, all while braving a high volume of incoming rounds and laying down cover fire. For much of the time, Chiarini applied aid to the wounded with one arm, while providing suppressive fire with the other. After moving the team to safety, Chiarini stayed on the battlefield and unleashed M-16 fire at the enemy forces. He continued the fight as reinforcements arrived, eliminating several insurgents.

This was not the only mission that placed Chiarini in harm's way. His team was repeatedly fired on by snipers. 30 of the convoys he rode in were struck by roadside bombs and three suicide bombers. The constant danger makes it all the more impressive that of the 100 Marines treated by Chiarini, none lost his or her life.



On October 22, 2007, Chiarini received the Silver Star medal in the Rhode Island statehouse. He presently serves at Naval Health Clinic New England in Newport, RI.

*Navy Times* [story](#)  
*Providence Journal* [story](#)