

FIRST LIEUTENANT TIMOTHY KEEGAN

When First Lieutenant Timothy Keegan was selected to be a U.S. Army Reserve Ambassador for Florida, he had no prior military experience. However, after working closely with Army Reserves Soldiers and lobbying the State legislature on their behalf, he was inspired to join the U.S. Army Reserves despite being 44 years old, --20 years older than most of the other men and women beginning their military careers.

"I was a USAR Ambassador for three years and with every event and meeting that I attended, I became more and more impressed with the quality, dedication and camaraderie of the men and women of the Army Reserve. As a result, I too wanted to experience the pride that comes from serving in uniform in support of a greater good," said Keegan.

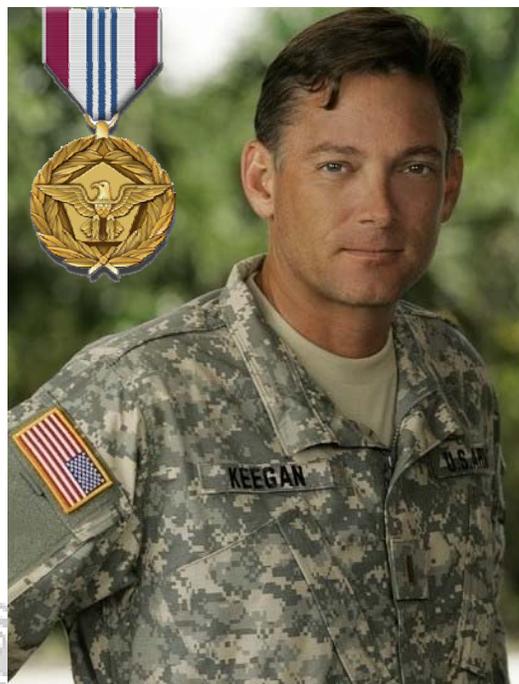
Keegan resigned his Ambassadorship in 2006 to volunteer for duty as a uniformed member of the USAR. Keegan had over 20 years of experience in the governmental and political arena, as well as a solid business background in the civilian and private sectors before being selected in 2003 to serve as the U.S. Army Reserve Ambassador for Florida. In this civilian position, which is equivalent in Army rank to a Two Star General, Keegan worked with federal, state and local leaders to support the USAR's legislative initiatives, provide guidance to U.S. Army Reserve leadership, and recognize citizen soldiers and their families throughout the state at official ceremonies and military events. He also successfully lobbied for increased recruitment ages for prospective National Guard and Reserve Soldiers.

Attending Military Intelligence Officer Basic Course surrounded by peers 20 years his junior, Keegan found that the disparity in age served a greater purpose; he became a mentor to the younger officers in his class. Through the mentorship he provided, Keegan formed lasting friendships with many of these younger Officers that extend beyond the military.

While deployed from February to August 2009, Keegan served multiple roles within the Joint Intelligence Operations Center in Kabul, Afghanistan. As a Military Intelligence Officer, he shared intelligence information between coalition partners and coordinated Information Operations on behalf of the Tri-partite Joint Intelligence Operations Center in conjunction with the Pakistani and Afghan military.

The 48-year-old lieutenant admits that due to his age and prior civilian experience, he was able to work closely alongside senior commanding officers while in Afghanistan, something that most lieutenants do not have the opportunity to do.

"Due to my civilian background and experience, I was given a certain amount of latitude to do what needed to be done without excessive supervision. With age generally comes wisdom; I had to demonstrate that I was capable, which in turn generated confidence and trust with my superiors," said Keegan.



U.S. Army Reserve 1LT Timothy Keegan earned a Defense Meritorious Service Medal while serving in Afghanistan in 2009.

The highlight of Keegan's six-month deployment was his involvement in Operation Firestarter, a cooperative effort between the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and the Afghan Ministry of the Interior in order to reduce drug production and trafficking in Afghanistan. As a result of the operation, a heroin lab capable of producing large amounts of heroin was seized and destroyed.

Keegan earned the Defense Meritorious Service Medal for his actions during the deployment.

The DMSM "is a unique medal and one not previously awarded to a [First Lieutenant] at the [International Security Assistance Force Headquarters]," Keegan said.

Earning the medal, Keegan said "was based upon a number of [Military Intelligence] initiatives and my participation in an air-assault in the eastern province of Afghanistan," which was "very dangerous."

Proud to serve as a Reservist, Keegan believes that the Army Reserve fills an important gap between military needs and the "skills-rich" experience earned every day in the civilian workplace.

"No single organization can provide the vast array of skills that the Army Reserve is capable of providing in support of our nation's military objectives. It is the broad real world experiences that our USAR members provide that bridge the unique strengths of the full-time military and their civilian counterparts," Keegan said.