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Period: 2

Steve Saldana
U.S. ARMY
8 Years in Service
2017

Steve Saldana

Every brave man and woman that enlists into the U.S. Army has their own personal experience and story to tell. Steve Saldana was one of those brave men that experienced what it was like to serve for the United States of America and what one goes through when fighting a war. It took about a year for Saldana to build up the courage to join the U.S. Army. At the age of seventeen he joined the Army on March 18, 2000. After having grown up in a somewhat limiting household the Army was the solution to get out of the house and prove his independence. Having served eight years in the service gave Saldana a memorable experience in the U.S. Army.

Before getting deployed into Iraq, Saldana first had to overcome his basic training. Saldana chose the Army because he wanted to become an Army Ranger, however, he couldn't live up to his dream of becoming an Army Ranger because he broke his foot, but continued to walk on it for another sixty miles. On March 23, 2003 during Saldana's basic training, a Muslim that was in the Army killed fellow troops at camp Pennsylvania. Some troops were wounded and even killed, one of those brave men happened to be their captain. Saldana's experience on basic training was unfulfilled about his hopes on becoming an Army Ranger.

Saldana's experience on the Iraq war was heart racing. Being a front line infantry means you're constantly getting shot at. Being shot at nonstop had Saldana terrified and realize how much he wanted to go back home. Men were starving, their MRE's didn't fill them up. Saldana

was 175 pounds when he first joined the Army, after his service he was 133 pounds. Saldana realized that people at home should never take anything for granted, because they don't know what fighting a war is like, or even living in one. Saldana's overall look on the war was pointless, men and women were getting killed everyday. People were sleeping in dirt holes. Everyday before fighting in the war people say goodbye because they think that it would be their last day living.

Even when fighting in a war there is still free time. During that free time Saldana would often pull pranks on each other. They were given about two hours a day with nothing to do, so they made that free time fun and memorable. All of Saldana's buddies had nicknames. Even Saldana, his nickname was "scuba Steve". Saldana was given this nickname when one day he was standing on a shopping cart during their first field problem with a javelin in both of his hands. The shopping cart was right in front of a nasty pond when his buddies pushed the cart into the pond forcing Saldana to swim all the way across the nasty pond. So even when fighting a war Saldana and his fellow troops found a way to make bad times good.

Many men and women regret serving in the war. Saldana was one of those men. He felt like he was missing out with all of his buddies from high school. Then he realized how much time he missed out with his old friends when he came back from war and saw that they're all married and having kids. One of His regrets were not going to college, because he realized how important having an education is. There were things that Saldana saw that couldn't be unseen. Even back at home it was hard for Saldana to fit in with his old friends. Saldana wishes that he didn't go into service, however, he is glad that he got to serve and protect our country from harm.

Saldana's life after the war was difficult. When he came back home he wanted to go back with his Army brothers, but when he was out there he wanted to come back home. Saldana became an aircraft part distributor for Hong Kong after the war. Saldana decided that he wanted to go to school, so he went to college and then became an accountant for aircraft parts. Overall, Saldana is a very brave and courageous man for serving our country ,however, believes that education is the most important thing and many people should make that a priority.