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Anthony Bellanca was born on October 15, 1947 in Steubenville, Ohio. His father, Anthony Bellanca, was a steel maker and his mother, Josephine Bellanca, was a stay at home mom to her four children. Around the age of seven his family moved out to Fontana, California, where he was raised, so his father could work at Kaiser Steel. In his high school years, he met his wife, Sharon Bellanca, at a dance in San Bernardino through a friend of his. They got married in 1968 and had three children. In his college years, Anthony studied accounting at Chaffey Jr College. While doing so, he worked and transferred to Cal Poly Pomona where he graduated in September 1969.

Before entering the army, Anthony received a school deferment which allowed him to finish college and graduate before being drafted. Because of this, he was drafted in December of 1969 and sent off to the army in July of 1970. At the time, in order to be drafted, people would be assigned a lottery number based on the person's birth date and would then be randomly selected as more men were needed to fight the Vietnam war. The federal government would announce a range of numbers as needed and if the number assigned was included, then that person would be drafted to serve the army. Mr. Bellanca was assigned a lower number and because the army was in need of many men it was not a surprise to him when he was drafted and went into the service on July 14, 1970. Anthony Bellanca began his basic training at Fort Ord in

Monterrey. Here, he trained for two months before being sent to Fort Huachuca, Arizona where he remained for the rest of his career in the army. In his basic training, he was first trained to be a soldier. His training consisted of speed walking and how to kill others and not be killed yourself. At his time on the base, Anthony learned the importance of paying close attention to training and instructions. While learning to fire a M16 in a firing line, the soldiers also learned that when the commanders ordered you to drop, you must drop immediately. One day one of the men accidentally pointed his gun at the other men in line, who then quickly learned the importance of dropping to possibly save their own lives. Luckily, the gun never fired, but from then on Mr. Bellanca became extremely acquainted with the strict orders to avoid any harm to himself or others. At Fort Ord Anthony had very little free time and many times he was required to eat as he went from one place to the next. However, every Sunday was a day for themselves to do whatever they wished as long as they remained on base. They were able to attend religious services, write letters to loved ones, review material for their next training class, play catch, and relax, which after the hard week was much needed. His second army base, Fort Huachuca, was mostly responsible for the main communications between the US military service and the US service in Vietnam. Rather than being sent to Vietnam, he used his education as an accountant to be a military pay specialist where he handled the compensation for trip expenses when men would be temporarily sent for training during their service. Even though Mr. Bellanca was constantly busy, he made sure to make family a priority.

Anthony shared the same sentiments as any new father would about leaving his family to join the war efforts. His first son, Todd Bellanca, had just been born before his draft and Anthony was then required to leave his eight month old son. Mr. Bellanca felt the expected guilt

of not being there to fulfill his fatherly responsibility and was fearful for his unknown future of possibly not returning to see his family again, but was reassured knowing that his wife would be able to handle the responsibilities of the home. Luckily during his time at Fort Huachuca, his family was able to move and stay with him on post for the remaining months of his service.

Anthony was released from Fort Huachuca in January 1972. This was six months earlier than his two year term was finished because the war was dwindling down and the army did not need as many troops. This was a major relief to him, as he was anxious to get back home to his family and free from the anxiety of war training. As expected, the effects of war were physically, emotionally, and spiritually challenging for Mr. Bellanca. Through his toughest days he was able to rely on prayer and his faith to get him through; he counted on his Catholic rosary to lift his spirits through the challenging and hard times that he naturally experienced in his military career. As he returned home, he felt satisfied with his work and contribution to his country. His core belief in protecting America, his family, and democracy never faltered, from the time he arrived to his departure. Anthony was never fond of war itself. He believes it should always be the last resort, but he stayed true to his core values of democracy, even in times of dissension among the American homefront. There was a mixed sentiment towards the enlisted men and the war itself, from some Americans, as the fighting seemed to accomplish nothing, only costing America men and money. Anthony observed news reports showing Americans less appreciation for the services, discrediting their contribution to a stalemate cause. Though this was discouraging and he somewhat shared the sentiments of his fellow Americans, he was devoted to the cause of fighting for democracy. As he returned home, he had a greater appreciation for the security and

freedom he and his family shared. He views the war as a mixed blessing, one that taught him new life lessons while exposed to the severity and dissension of war.

Once he returned home, Anthony resumed to normal life. He used his accounting skills in a job with a CPA firm, then Riverside County and later in Los Angeles. He enjoyed his role of being a father, and spending more time with his kids. He recalls that adjusting to normal life did not take too long because he was able to be a financial specialist during the war rather than experience combat which relieved him from experiencing any traumatic combat memories that many soldiers must bring home with them. He will always carry with him his memory of his contribution to his country and the experiences he has been through. Just a short year and a half of his military lifestyle has helped to shape his beliefs and the person he is today.