

Gabe Briones, Lauren Lenox

Period 3

Samuel Garcia

Marine Corps

Four years

2018

Samuel Garcia

We have soldiers in Afghanistan to this day, the opportunity to get to know what's really happening out there is simply amazing. Samuel Garcia was a Marine who enlisted at age seventeen with permission of his parents. He lived in a one bedroom apartment with a family of ten, later moving to a house of his own. He attended Arroyo high school in the city of San Bernardino. His high school life was a bit of a struggle, for example he was far behind on graduation credits and involved in gangs which led him to turn his life around. Samuel started taking classes before and after school, during the weekends, during summer, and during winter and spring break to make up his credits. To join the Marines you need a diploma, which is what motivated him to finish high school. Garcia is living proof that anyone can achieve anything they set their minds to regardless of their backgrounds or the obstacles that lie in front of them.

Samuel first joined the school of infantry, a brutal bootcamp in San Diego, CA to prepare him for his military experience. The training had him waking up at the crack of dawn and pushing him to limits some could never imagine. Garcia was always considered the person to

never make it out of training because of his size which motivated him to succeed in camp. He was able to visit his family and young daughter during his time there.

Garcia was deployed two times during his service and both were to Afghanistan. Their main mission was to help stabilize the country and help them with their own government. When he was first deployed in 2012, which was the hardest year for the war of Afghanistan, he faced a lot of casualties. Although it was one of the hardest years for the war they would still manage to keep it loose amongst each other. During the rest time his unit would pull pranks and have laughs to lighten the mood for everyone. Garcia was a medic during his time in service, so the casualties around him were his responsibility. It was whether to keep fighting or to save the soldiers in his unit from bleeding out in front of him. Garcia went deaf in one ear from an explosion and had to have surgery in his knee due to injuries he endured in combat they were so bad he became a liability which lead him not to serve the twenty years he desired. In his second deployment to Afghanistan, he was injured with hearing loss, a back injury, and several leg injuries due to a mortar exploding next to his unit. There was fifteen men in his unit, and currently there are four of them Garcia still keeps in touch with all of them.

Samuel came home a different person. He had night terrors and was just confused on what to do with all the time he had on his hands and was battling PTSD. His ex girlfriend helped him through a lot of these hardships. A lot of his former Marines were affected by their time in the war causing them to end their lives. For all of the Marines to just get up and leave, he felt all the lives were taken in vain and was one of the hardest things for him to have to see and go through because of the long lasting relationship he made with everyone of them.

Garcia with the four friends he still keeps in touch, go out together to this day and spend time with each other. He attended the Marine ball in 2016, where he was the main speaker of the event and was awarded an honorary medal. At the ball, he was awarded an education medal of honor at the age of twenty-two and is the youngest veteran to ever receive this achievement. He spoke to everyone about giving back to all the wrong he did in the past and to show his support to those who ended their lives. Samuel is currently a Biology major and is a licensed nurse at Kaiser medical office in Claremont, CA. Garcia will be going to back to school and will attend UCR to become a licensed doctor. Garcia has overcome his depression and is healthy while raising his daughter of seven years old. The young man has started his own program to help soldiers overcome and recover from their PTSD. His main goal is to give back to his community and to his country in a positive manner.

Samuel Garcia turned his life around by joining the Marine Corps and serving for his country. He has overcome a lot of situations that have presented adversity which has made him become the influential person he is today. Garcia today is striving to give back to his country and community by helping soldiers that are battling for their lives after service. He made a positive impact in lives today and will continue to do so in the far ahead future.