



“In My Own Words....”

Raider Liz McKenney

No matter how much I write, I won't be able to explain Raider effectively to you, the reader. I simply cannot write in a single essay how much Raiders has done to improve my stamina, character, leadership, overall personality and general attitude. Raiders has made me the person I am today. Without the support of this team—no, this family—I wouldn't be on the path to success that I am.

The lessons I learned from Raiders go so much further than how to treat a heat casualty, or how to clean a cut. Raiders taught me to always be there for my teammates, through thin and grainy hot sugar sand to thick, freezing mud; but not just be there for them, to be there or them in any sense. Whether they need me to take a rucksack because they've carried it for too long, push them through a challenging obstacle, scratch their nose because they have both hands on the litter, or just hold their hand because they have a cramp and don't think they can run another step, I will be there for them.

Raiders taught me to always do what you can for others. A kind word of encouragement to a cadet who's struggling is worth more than an hour of praise to a cadet who's won. A willing ear for a needy cadet to talk to can be the difference between a good decision and a bad one. A silent embrace between two teammates who just won their third and final state championship can mean more to them than any ring could. The coaches of this team are ready and willing to do whatever it is they need to do for the forty some-odd cadets that need them. I know that without the guidance, advice and friendship of those three amazing men, I wouldn't be where I am today. I can't say any more about the greatness of this team, so I'll just leave with this piece of advice for future Raiders: “I'm not saying it's going to be easy, I'm saying it's going to be worth it.”