

News and stories

Gold Star Mom Was in Tears After Meeting Ambassador of Afghanistan. Then She Heard a 7-Year-Old Girl Speak...

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Justen Charters | [Independent Journal Review](#)

The loss of a child is a painful and life-changing event that shakes any parent to the core. Jill Stephenson, who lost her son — U.S. Army Ranger Benjamin Kopp — is all too familiar with the pain that comes from such loss.

In July of 2009, she received a phone call that Kopp had been shot and was coming home to be treated at Walter Reed Hospital. “When I got the call Ben was shot, my heart fell into my stomach. I was told he was shot in the leg and had undergone surgery and was recovering. My first thought was that he lost his leg,” said Stephenson.

After eight days of fighting, Kopp's body gave out. He was just twenty-one years old.

Since that time, Stephenson has made at least two trips to Arlington National Cemetery each year.

The visits fall on in mid-December for Wreaths Across America and over Memorial Day weekend.