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Navy Surgeon General Vice Adm. Adam M. Robinson Jr. offers remarks at the Lakeshore Foundation: Lima Foxtrot Project, Birmingham Alabama, 05 May 2010 during Navy Week Birmingham

Good afternoon everyone! We're not at a funeral or a wake. So Good morning!! This is about what we are doing for one another. I love when you start a presentation because you said 'what are we supposed to be doing together here with one another? What's the purpose of us being here together on this earth?' And I think it's simply to help one another. I say this frequently. I think the Lakeshore Foundation underscores that in a very indelible and very concrete way because you make a difference in the lives of the men and women who come here. I congratulate you for that.

I was told here today that you all want to hear from me to make sure you're doing things the right way. My only thought to you is that #1, you're doing it the right way and #2 anytime time you bring wounded warriors, you understand the need to bring families in, you recognize wounded cannot heal without their families and you include them in that whole scenarios, and you bring in those life lessons to those injured in a variety of ways...they are sent to a forward operating base for resuscitative surgery which is nothing more than what you saw in M.A.S.H. (Meatball surgery) You're going to be surgically resuscitated so you can get back to Bagram or Kandahar. Then you will go to Germany...then by the way, in order to get field you need your corpsmen and medics, you're 80-404s, you need to be resuscitated when you're there, you need to get to place where doctors and nurses are there to help you. You've got to make sure that the Air Force and their C-CAT teams can get you from wherever you need to be. And remember the Air force is taking people that are on heart/lung machines and literally flying then to Germany to National Naval Medical Center, Balboa, Walter Reed, Portsmouth, etc. There are a variety of places that accept our wounded warriors back.

Anytime you can bring together Army , Navy, Air Force we can fight like we cannot believe our sister services, we're like a bunch of sieves...but when it comes to the care of our wounded we cannot be beat and we don't take the time to discuss any service specific or parochial interests. We simply look at those men and women that we have to care for and we bring them back here.

You at Lakeshore are emphasizing one of the key lynchpins to this whole process which is that to make sure that we on the military side bring the families into the hospitals, get them incorporated into the comprehensive care model that we use, make sure that we have all the things that they may need to have, the surgical or the occupational physical therapy, the social worker, psychologist, or the minister or the chaplain so we make that from we heal from an emotional and physical side, but also from a spiritual side. This is what it takes to bring a full person back to society. And we have to make sure that the family is incorporated in that process on a day to day process from the moment they hit our doors until they leave. Lakeshore is the perfect pass off because you incorporate that service and reintegration back into the community because the whole point here is not to have men and women in wheelchairs and disabled asking for help, but to bring these men and women back into their communities with their families, so they can make a difference in the lives of all the people in this room.

In a way, You are Navy. Some of us have worn the uniform, some have not, but Navy is not about submarines and aircraft, or maritime strategies, or about tactics, it's about human beings. The Navy is us...we are the face of the Navy. All of the shapes and sizes and sexes. All of the things that make America great are what makes the Navy great. So the Navy coming to Birmingham is only a way of suggesting to you that the story you tell is the same story that we tell because you are Navy. We are You. So it's our way of coming back to say thank you for everything you do.

Our CNO says quite often that we need to emphasize to the American people realize the Return on Investment of the Navy is worthwhile, and that there is a return on investment. But I know that it's there because the men and women like you at Lakeshore do an amazing job. In fact, you do the best work I have seen in a non-military setting of bringing together all of the ethos' of the military service. For Navy that is Honor, courage, and commitment. For the Navy, that means being professionally prepared to do the best that you can do, whatever that professional expertise/licensure you may hold. You have to be the best at that. You have to be personally ready meaning you have to understand putting 1st things first..the law of first principles. What is first...first is actually you and God and your relationship with your Superior Being and right behind that is family and making sure you schedule those events with women, children and family and realizing if you don't include them that your life is not complete. And 3rd to realize the spiritual part is to realize that this life is not about us as individuals but as a group of people who must respond to higher order concerns and consequences and that we must make ourselves available and provide the support and the courage and the compassion to help one another get through this world and if we don't do that we're not worthy to be in this world, and if we do that then we pay our ticket through this world. Now with that said, Lakeshore I can't show or tell you anything, I am just so proud and honored by the work you do and the commitment of Lakeshore and Birmingham's commitment to our wounded warriors and to rehabilitative care and I am also honored to know that this is truly a world of possibilities and that you will leave no one out and that everyone has a place. Like the great utilitarian philosophers like John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham that there is a place for everyone in this world, we only need to find it. We only need to make sure that we leave no one behind. A great Marine, a great Navy medic, a great Air Force, a great Army, a great Navy. Bring everyone with us..and that's what you do here at Lakeshore. And don't forget to include the families. You can't leave them out.

And let me conclude with a story. You remember the movie "The Best Years of Our Life." If you haven't seen the movie it's a 4 star film and well worth it. Homer gets injured. He's in the Navy. He spends 2 years before he comes home but he doesn't want to come home. He finally get home and before he gets home he stops to have something to drink...but his friends say you gotta go home. And Homer wonders 'I wonder if my family will still recognize me without my two arms...I wonder if my girlfriend will still be interested in looking at me now that I don't have arms. I wonder if the world that I left is the world that I'm coming back to.' The answer is absolutely not. The world we leave is never the world we come back . That does not mean it's a lesser world, but it is a different world. So when Homer gets out of the cab with his seabag, his little sister says "Homer's home" and everyone embraces and they let him know that they love him as much as they ever did. That's not the end of the story, so you'll have to see the movie. But I have to tell you that this is an important part of what we do, because now we have the

family members present when our wounded warriors awake. Oftentimes they are unconscious when they awake and they are still in the war ladies and gentlemen. The first people they talk to is their families and we have to tell them that they are home now because they last thing they remember is going down in Afghanistan or Iraq. Fallujah for me was a turning point because we had about 85 casualties at Bethesda, many in ICU and when I say casualties, I mean multiple highly acute trauma.

So Lakeshore-Lima Foxtrot, thank you very much because you are an addition to our concept of care, patient and family centered care that we espouse in the navy. You are an addition to that comprehensive trauma care model that we utilize National naval Medical Center because you continue that patient and family care, that philosophical bent, that same compassionate care, when they come back here, and you are committed to that for the duration of the warriors. You didn't say that to me today but I know that that is the basis in which you work here today. Now, I had prepared remarks but I'm not going to use them.

Thank you very much. When I was at Birmingham News earlier today, the editor said to me, "You'll find Lakeshore" but your briefs truly is what you do, you are doing your work with a lot of heartfelt compassion. And I appreciate coming to the heartland, as someone from Kentucky and going to school in Indiana and Illinois, and being far away from any coast line and growing up with no Navy in my life. I'm a first generation person of the Navy. That ethos of service lives abundantly here and in other parts of the U.S. That ethos of service will be what carries us through this century and our wounded warriors. You make you feel good today because I worry a lot about what's going to happen to our wounded warriors down the road in 2040-2050 and beyond because they will be the old men and women down the road and they will still need our care and support. So thank you so much for everything that you do.

Introduced Lt John Garnder from Alabama, true Crimson Tide.

Introduced Captain (select) Cappy Surette.