

‘As a Husband and Father ... It Took So Much Off My Shoulders’

Marine Corps veteran Charles Schmid encourages fellow veterans to seek help from the VFW or other organizations

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Charles Schmid, 44, enlisted in the Marine Corps on September 12, 2001.

“I was watching TV in my college dorm room when the towers were struck on 9/11,” he recalled. “Immediately, I knew it was my duty to serve. I was a senior in college, but I gave that all up.”

Within months, he was training at Parris Island. Schmid served proudly in both the Marine Corps and Army National Guard before retiring in 2012.

Today, he lives in San Antonio, Texas, with his wife Sandra. They have seven children: Charles Josiah, Alexis, Timothy, Stephen, Lexie, Maddie and Lauren.

Having recently started a small business, Schmid was struggling to make ends meet. He contacted the Texas Veterans Commission for help and learned about the VFW’s Unmet Needs program.

Schmid was impressed with the service he received.

“Unlike other organizations where you wait months for an answer, I was surprised to receive such a quick response,” he said. “I told the VFW what I needed, and they took care of it.”

The assistance paid Schmid’s water bill.

“It came at a very desperate time for me and my family, and it meant so much,” he said. “Just starting a business, income was slow to come in. I sure didn’t have what I needed to pay the water bill. It was only a matter of time before it was shut off.”

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“What the VFW did was a blessing to our family,” he continued. “As a husband and father who needs to provide, it took so much off my shoulders.”

Schmid is grateful the tough times he was already experiencing did not take a turn for the worse.

“This year has been hard, but because of the kindness of those who made the assistance possible, it didn’t have to get harder,” he said. “In a time when many veterans feel abandoned, it shows that there’s still hope.”

“Not everyone can understand what veterans have gone through. That’s why programs like this are much needed,” he explained. “We don’t expect a handout, but many of us need assistance, and it can be hard to ask family or friends.”

Schmid encourages fellow veterans to seek help from the VFW or other organizations. But most of all, he encourages them to take pride in what they have done for their nation.

“To all veterans,” he said, “your service is greatly appreciated. And you deserve these benefits. Keep your head high and know that this nation is safer because of you.”

[Learn more about the VFW’s Unmet Needs program.](#)