



Greetings Brothers and Sisters across the 6<sup>th</sup> District,

After serving four years “on the bag” as a Recruiter it’s good to be back in one of the richest environments of any service, recruiting! I remember like yesterday, those long challenging days in Newport News, VA encouraging and inspiring young people to serve their country. From sun-up to sun-down constantly on the move, so much so that it is still difficult for me to stay still for any length of time. I had the privilege of facilitating and watching young men and women change their lives forever. There’s still such a rush that comes from being involved first hand in shaping and molding the future leaders in our armed forces; it is difficult to put into words. Thankfully, I don’t have to because you know this feeling well. With this calling comes a great deal of sacrifice -- not just for us but also for our families -- and I must admit it is a difficult balance to find. The good news is - balance does exist and can be found!

To find my balance, I first had to understand how to manage the stress I was under. This environment has a way putting pressure on you in ways that you may not even be aware of, but the people around you are. With the amazing sense of satisfaction and fulfillment that the recruiting process can bring, it also has a way of breaking us down if we are not careful. There were some obvious “danger signs” while on recruiting duty that, looking back, I can see clearly. First, not sleeping, my body was not able to recover and over time it gets worse. Second, separation between work and home did not exist. My home life became an extension of my job. The few hours I had at home were dedicated to preparing for the next day. Last and not least, I had unhealthy nutritional habits. I ate when I could and drank if I remembered. Recruiting can sidetrack us to the point we take our bodies “needs” for granted. *Please do not make that same mistake!* A successful tour is not only defined by leaving with the coveted recruiting ribbon but also your overall health and wellness for you and your family. This is the CO’s and my “highest priority.” Be deliberate about investing in the temple that God has provided. We only have one body and when it is neglected, all the other areas of life have a way of being affected in a negative way. Getting older has made me more aware of the consequences that my body still experiences.

Thank you for welcoming me with open arms into an environment that I truly love! It’s an amazing opportunity to support the staff and families here in the 6<sup>th</sup> District after finishing a tour with 3d Recruit Training Battalion at Parris Island. To be a part of this rich tradition is something that very few Chaplains can claim. Be encouraged because what you do does make a difference, beyond what we can know this side of Glory. Generations are being blessed because of the blood and sweat you invest daily. God Bless you and yours as we move forward as “a family” to finish strong in 2012 and position for an even better 2013! You have a Chaplain who loves what he does, cares about every one of you and your families, and is always available if needed! God has even greater things in store in 2013!

Honored to Serve,

Chaplain Shaw