

## **WARNING! SCAMMERS ARE TARGETING OUR MILITARY MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES!**

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Social networking sites are a great way to stay in contact with friends and family, but servicemembers and their families need to beware of scammers who also want access to personal information. The XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg Legal Assistance Office recently received a phone call from a woman distraught over a fraudulent Facebook page, which tried to exploit people by claiming to belong to an injured servicemember. The profile included real photos, showing a soldier recovering in a military hospital surrounded by other soldiers. After creating a fake Facebook page using these photos, the scammers contacted strangers pretending to be the servicemember. Among other lies, the scammers told these individuals they were stuck overseas in Europe and needed help getting home.

With Facebook and other social media sites, scammers have access to personal information and photographs of millions of people. They use these personal details and photos to scam strangers and people you know. Every servicemember and family member should remember to keep their personal information secure. If you belong to a social media website like Facebook, ensure you understand and monitor your privacy settings. Keep an eye out for fake pages created with your information and be wary of friend requests from people you don't know in real life.

Although fake identify scams have been around forever, crooks can use technology to scam more and more people. In addition to Facebook and other social media sites like MySpace or Google +, scammers also use fake e-mail accounts, real e-mail accounts which have been hacked, and the telephone to target victims with your information. Technology changes but the scams remain pretty much the same. Scammers have even called elderly parents and grandparents pretending to be children or grandchildren in need of money.

Do not be a victim of one of these scams. If someone contacts you pretending to be a servicemember or someone you know, verify the information. If they claim to be stuck in a foreign country, tell them to go to an official office (like a U.S. Embassy). It may be hard, but resist the urge to send money. These crooks are professional liars; they make a living convincing the public to fall for their scams. Keep your guard up and protect yourself. If you think you have been a victim of a scam you can contact the legal office. You can also contact the North Carolina Attorney General's office through their website at [www.ncdoj.gov](http://www.ncdoj.gov) or call toll free 1-877-5-NO SCAM.