



For Immediate Release
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Wounded Warrior Honored in Fairbanks

Current and previous Guardsmen also recognized at luncheon

FAIRBANKS, Alaska— A former Alaska Army National Guardsman was honored and welcomed home in Fairbanks Nov. 15 by family, friends, and comrades at a luncheon held at Pike’s Waterfront Lodge.

Spc. Jeremy Pierce, a recipient of the Bronze Star with valor and Purple Heart, was recognized along with past and present members of the Alaska National Guard at a brunch provided Jay Ramras, owner of Pike’s.

More than 250 people attended the program, including Fairbanks community members, Fairbanks-based Soldiers, and Guardsmen who traveled from Anchorage, Barrow, and the Kenai Peninsula. Many of the Soldiers were members of the 1-297th Cavalry who served with Pierce during his first deployment to Iraq with the Alaska Guard.

“It’s a great honor to be standing in front of these guys,” Pierce said. “When you are clapping for me, know there are many people here who put their lives on the line.”

The homecoming was Pierce’s first trip back to Alaska after sustaining combat injuries while deployed to Iraq this past August with the Oregon National Guard. He lost part of his left leg and part of a finger on his left hand. Pierce’s hard work from physical therapy at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. was apparent, as he was able to proudly walk around the room greeting guests.

The Adjutant General for the State of Alaska and commander of the Alaska National Guard Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Katkus presented Pierce with a solid silver coin for outstanding service to the United States and State of Alaska. Imprinted on one side of the coin is the Alaska state seal, with the Alaska National Guard Joint Forces Headquarters seal on the other side.

Rep. Nancy Dahlstrom, Sen. Joe Paskvan, Sen. John Coghill and his wife, Luann participated in the event. Ramras was also attending in his capacity as State Representative. U.S. Army Alaska Deputy Commander Col. Edward Daly, 1-297th Cavalry Commander Lt. Col. Wayne Hunt, and several other leaders were present. His father, Sam Pierce of Fairbanks, and several family members from Nenana also surrounded Pierce.

Dahlstrom, who led the program, expressed her gratitude for Pierce and the other service members in attendance.

“We not only honor Jeremy, but we honor all of the men and women who are serving every day,” Dahlstrom said. “This is just a small token of the appreciation that we have for you and what you do.”

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Spc. Jeremy Pierce, left, and Brig. Gen. Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard, share a moment Nov. 15 at Pike’s Waterfront Lodge in Fairbanks. Pierce was honored at a luncheon for his service and sacrifice as a National Guardsmen. Katkus presented an Alaska National Guard silver coin to Pierce at the event. It is the fourth coin awarded to a member of the Alaska Guard. Photo by Spc. Jill King, 134th Public Affairs Detachment, Alaska Army National Guard

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Rep. Nancy Dahlstrom, right, thanks Spc. Jeremy Pierce for his service during a luncheon Nov. 15 at Pike’s Waterfront Lodge in Fairbanks. Pierce, a Bronze Star with valor and Purple Heart recipient, was honored at the brunch.

Photo by Spc. Jill King, 134th Public Affairs Detachment, Alaska Army National Guard

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Sgt. Henry Monk, left, and Spc. Jeremy Pierce reunite during a luncheon Nov. 15 at Pike’s Waterfront Lodge in Fairbanks. Monk and Pierce previously served together in the Alaska Army National Guard. Pierce was honored at the luncheon for his service and sacrifice as a National Guardsmen. While deployed to Iraq with the Oregon National Guard, Pierce was wounded in combat and lost part of his left leg. Monk, a Fairbanks resident, is currently serving in the 1-297th Cavalry. Photo by Spc. Jill King, 134th Public Affairs Detachment, Alaska Army National Guard

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Spc. Jeremy Pierce, left, visits with members of the Alaska Army National Guard Nov. 15 at Pike’s Waterfront Lodge in Fairbanks. The brunch, sponsored by Pike’s owner Jay Ramras, honored Pierce and recognized current and previous members of the Alaska National Guard for their service. More than 250 Fairbanks residents and Alaska Guardsmen attended the event. Photo by Spc. Jill King, 134th Public Affairs Detachment, Alaska Army National Guard