



(Photo credit: William "TJ" Porter, Team Rubicon)

I am pleased to share the following blog post, written by Team Rubicon Clay Hunt Fellow Brandon Callahan. Content courtesy of Team Rubicon. To learn more about their mission of continued service through disaster response, visit TeamRubiconUSA.org.

Don't miss the series finale of [Chain of Command](#), airing this Monday night, February 26, at 9/8c, only on National Geographic.

By Brandon Callahan

Service called to me. For as long as I can remember I have been inexplicably drawn to

putting others before myself. Since I was young I have envisioned myself in the U.S. armed services, answering the call to protect those who cannot protect themselves.

When I turned 18 I took my oath of enlistment and answered the call in my own way, serving 8 proud years in the United States Marine Corps. Like many others that served during the global war on terror, I found myself engaged to protect populations against oppressors. The time I spent deployed I felt like a very small cog in a very large wheel, but regardless of how small I felt I was making a difference in the lives of people who needed our help.

Since taking the uniform off I have discovered that I could not stop serving. There is just as great of a need outside of the military for people who are dedicated to leaving the world a better place than they found it, for people that are dedicated still to answering the call to help those in their greatest times of need. I have dedicated a significant amount of time to the veterans-based volunteer service organization Team Rubicon, an organization that unites the skills of veterans and first responders to rapidly and efficiently respond to disasters around the globe. My sense of purpose was restored by filling a need here at home.

Series and films like *Chain of Command* need to be seen by the American public. It is important that we understand the true nature of the longest on-going conflict in our nation's history. We as a people must understand what we have committed to, and the impact that our efforts are having. I think it is important for civilians to catch a glimpse behind the curtain of military actions and strategy in order to best understand that things are never as cut-and-dried as the 6 o'clock news would have you believe. Equally, however, it is important for veterans and military families to see our ongoing actions and understand that, especially for veterans of the global war on terror, our efforts were not for nothing.

All enemies, foreign and domestic. That is the oath that we swore when we put on that

uniform and served. We did not hope for rewards or glory as we completed our missions on foreign soil, just as the men and women shown in *Chain of Command* are doing their duty without counting the cost. There is one thought, however, that sticks in my mind as I watch this series: do not forget the 'domestic' part of that oath.

Once you take the uniform off, you are not done. You can't be. You have the skills to make the world a better place. Our domestic enemy at home is apathy, not helping our fellow man in times of need. Serve. Be the positive change that you want to see in the world, and that our world so desperately needs right now. If you are reading this, this call goes out to you. Veteran or civilian, your community needs you, your country needs you, and our world needs all of us. Do not silently watch suffering when you can get involved and do something about it. Inaction is not an option.

Brandon Callahan served in the U.S. Marine Corps, 2008-2016, primarily in communications. He currently works as the Resource Director for the West Virginia VOAD's Disaster Case Management Program, while serving as Deputy Operations Manager for Team Rubicon Region III. Brandon obtained his Bachelor of Arts in History and Criminal Justice from Piedmont College in 2014 and a Master of Science in Justice, Law, and Criminology from American University in 2016.

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