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Senate

STAFF SERGEANT JOSEPH GARYANTES

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I would like to set aside a few moments today to reflect on the life of Army SSG Joseph Garyantes. Joe epitomized the best of our country's brave men and women who are fighting to free Iraq and to secure a new democracy in the Middle East. He exhibited unwavering courage, dutiful service to his country, and above all else, honor. In the way he lived his life--and how we remember him--Joe reminds each of us how good we can be.

Joe was born in Wilmington, DE, to Geraldine and the late James Garyantes. When he was 5 years old, his family moved to the Rehoboth Beach area. Joe attended Rehoboth Elementary School and Epworth Christian School. At Epworth, Joe was remembered as a man with a dynamic personality and a good sense of humor. He always was loyal to his fellow friends and teammates and won the most valuable player award in 10th grade for basketball. His family later moved to Florida.

When Joe was 18, he seriously considered spending life in the ministry helping people. Ultimately, though, this Delaware native enlisted in the Army and became a soldier at the young age of 20. His mission always remained the same though--helping people. When Joe was stationed in Kosovo before going to Iraq, he asked his family to send care packages. These packages were not for

him. They were meant for needy kids in the area. During the holiday season, Joe would bring over single soldiers for Christmas dinners and make them feel as though they were part of the family.

Joe spent the last several years in Germany, where he lived with his wife, Monika, and their two sons, Tevin, 6, and Ryan, 4. He was killed by a sniper in Muqdadiyah, Iraq. Joe was assigned to B Company, 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, Vilseck, Germany.

I rise today to commemorate Joe, to celebrate his life, and to offer his family our support and our deepest sympathy on their tragic loss. Our country is deeply grateful for his noble service to others, his idealism and for the example that he provided to all Americans by the way he led his life.