

1-2018

Adam Griffy, Olney, IL

Elizabeth Heldebrandt

Eastern Illinois University, emheldebrandt@eiu.edu

Brandi M. Gard

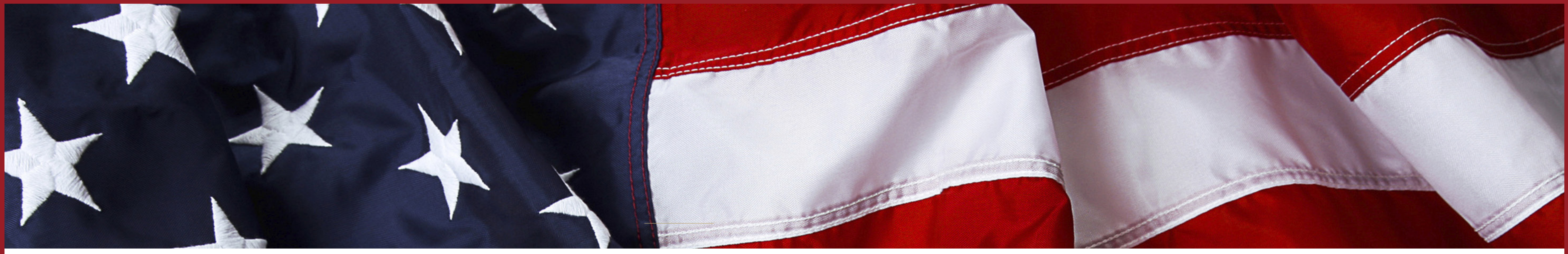
Eastern Illinois University, bmgard@eiu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/lib_exhibits_designsofduty_panels

Recommended Citation

Heldebrandt, Elizabeth and Gard, Brandi M., "Adam Griffy, Olney, IL" (2018). *Designs of Duty Exhibit Panels*. 4.
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/lib_exhibits_designsofduty_panels/4

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the 2018 - Designs of Duty at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Designs of Duty Exhibit Panels by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.



Adam Griffy

Age: 31

Branch of Military:
U.S. Navy

Rank: Petty Officer
3rd Class E-4

Dates of Service:
September 2005-
September 2011

Deployments: Iraq, 2006-2009

EIU alumnus



Adam Griffy

Olney, IL



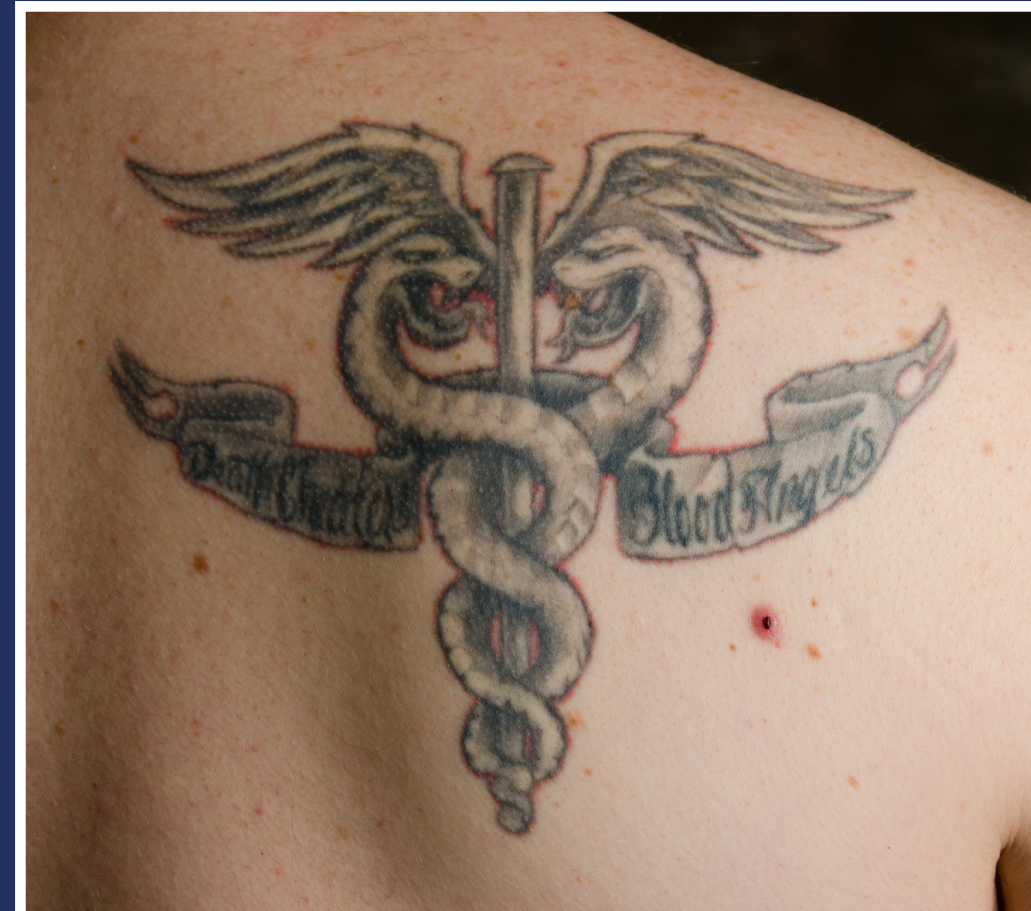
“I never thought I’d get a tattoo. But tattoos are like potato chips. You can’t just have one. The more you get, the more you want.”



“I have a USN, United States Navy, on this arm. And this is the emblem for the 1st Marine Division. It’s the cross with the blue diamond. It’s the last tattoo I got while I was in the military.”



“My first tattoo is probably one of the most meaningful to me. My Marines and I, we have a - I wouldn’t say it’s a matching tattoo, but everybody has a variation of something like it. I got that one the day after I got back from my first deployment.”



“On my right scapula is a medical caduceus, like the staff and the snakes and the wings. And I have a tattered banner behind it that says, ‘Death Cheaters and Blood Angels,’ which is one of the names that corpsman are called.”

“I have two more (tattoos), on the top of my feet. On one side, there’s a rooster and on the other side, there’s a pig. What sailors would do back in the colonial times, if their ship would sink the only things that would survive would be pigs and roosters, because they were housed in these wooden crates that would float in the water. So sailors would get a pig on one foot and a rooster on the other, so if their ship would sink, it would supposedly save them from drowning. And I just thought that was a pretty cool thing and I thought, ‘Why not?’ It’s a canvas, you know?”

“My tattoo artist said, ‘Well, let’s keep you in color.’ I thought, ‘No.’ It needs to be separate from my other tattoos. This is very important to me. It’s a reminder. Not just a tribute; it’s a reminder.”



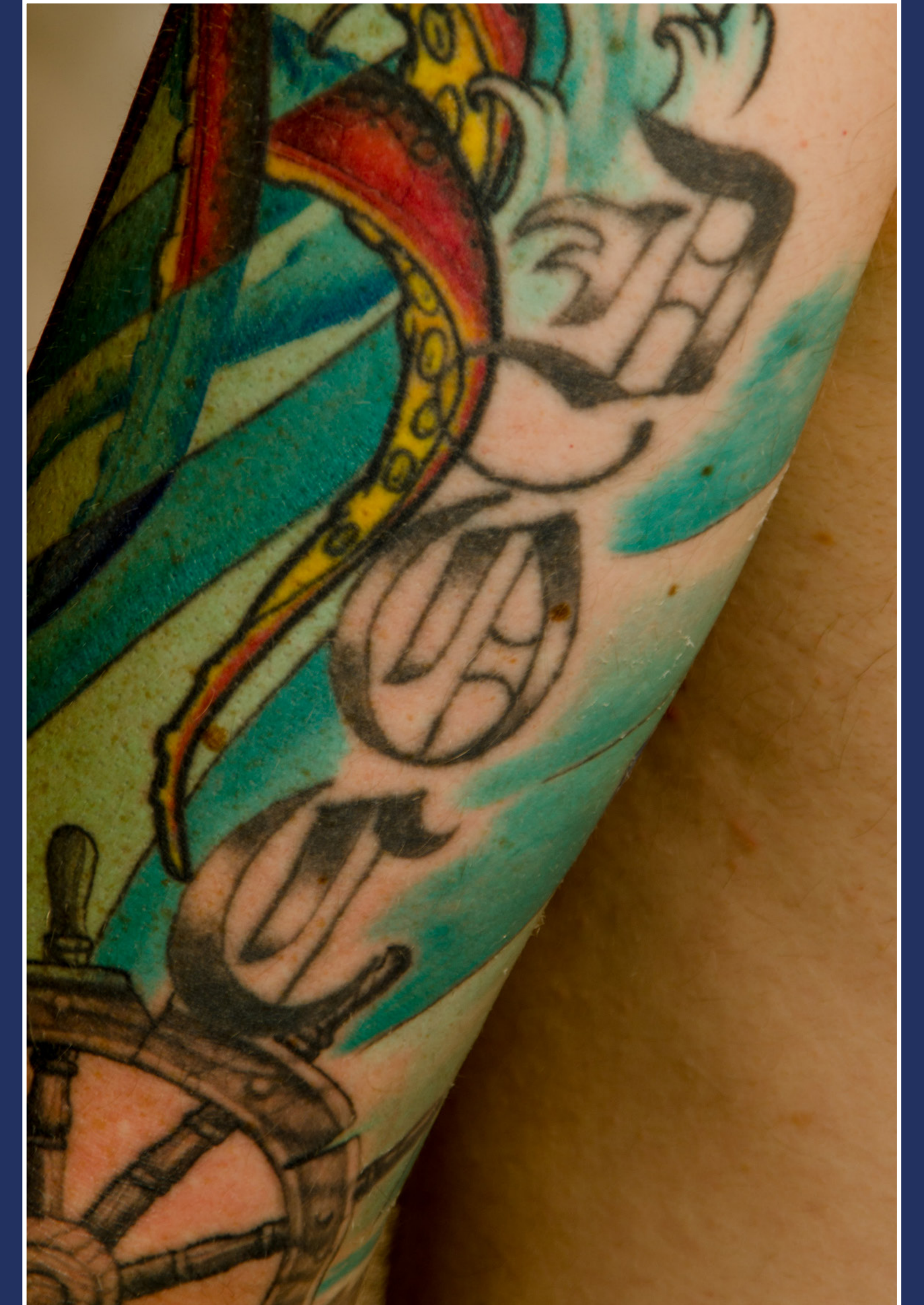
“I got this as a memorial. All memorials to my guys. And it’s all symbolic. All my tattoos have stories behind them, down to the number of skulls, the number of tears on the sail is significant, as well. The white hat, you know, the Dixie cup, that’s for my senior corpsman. He taught me everything he knew. He committed suicide a few years ago. So, that’s for him. The battle cross is very common with military rites and funerals, as a marker.”



“The inspiration behind this one is, like sailors, the sea. Mermaids and stuff like that. She’s at the bottom of the sea, and she’s lonely. But she has the remains of fallen sailors to keep her company. Basically it’s a reminder of your own mortality. And this is a representation of myself, meaning that I, too, am going to die one day. You have your anchor and a ship that is broken and has sunk. The sails are tattered. The ship has a hole in it; you can see right through it. And the ship’s wheel, it just kind of ties everything together.”



“After I got out of the military I got this. This is my squid. This is basically like a representation of myself. A squid is a derogatory term that a Marine or soldier would call a Navy personnel. Calling a Navy guy a squid is a big no-no. But my Marines could call me ‘Squid,’ because they’re my Marines. And if somebody else called me ‘Squid,’ those are literally fighting words. You don’t mess with their doctor. That’s their doctor. You just don’t do it. Sometimes my Marines would call me ‘Doc Devil Squid.’ It’s a derogatory term, but it’s also a term of endearment.”



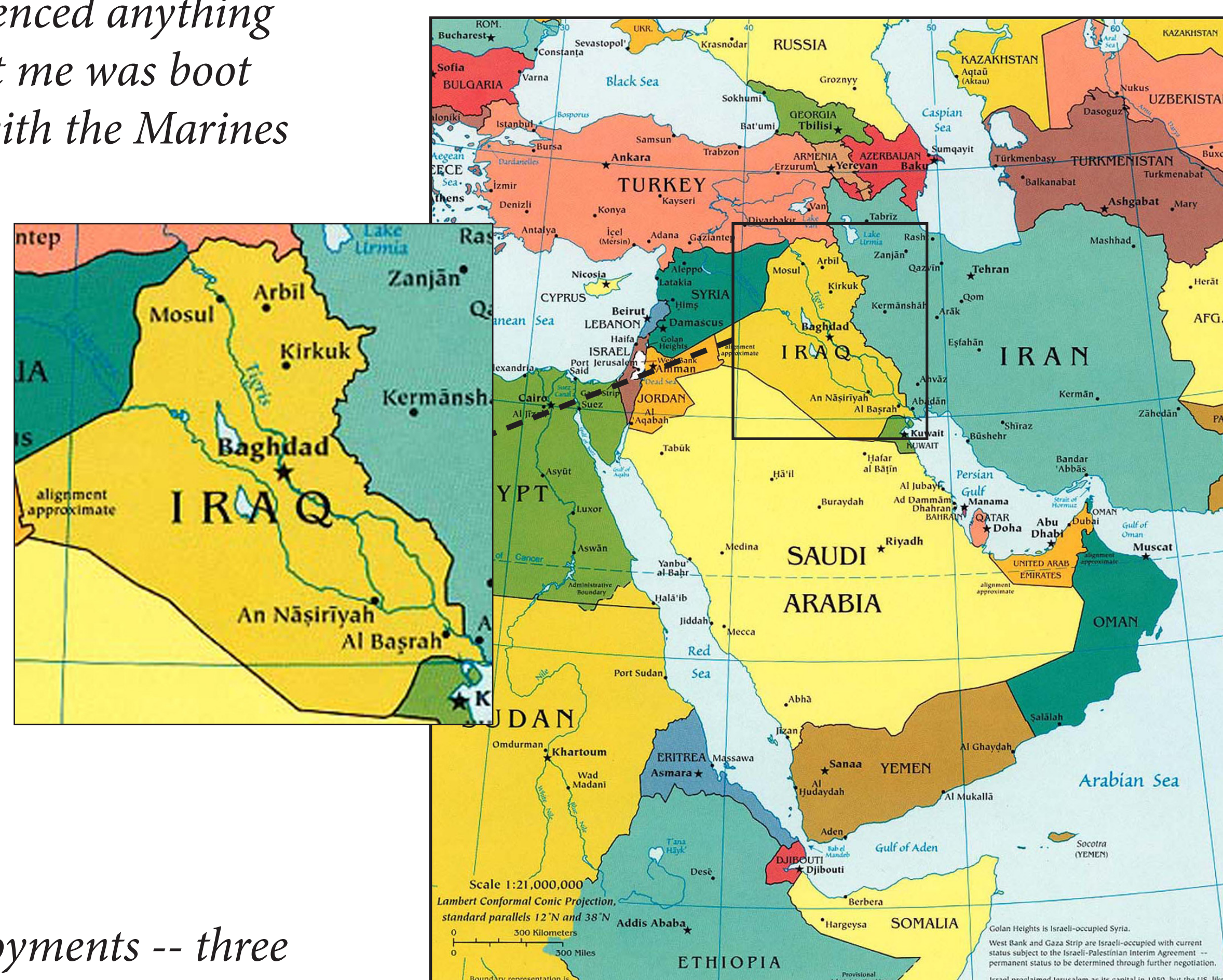
“When you’re a corpsman you have to earn the name ‘Doc.’ It’s not just given to you. So it’s a sign of respect. As soon as the Marines trust you with their money, their life and their wife, they just know that you’re going to take care of him. And they know that you would die for them and they would die for you, they give you the name ‘Doc.’ And I thought, ‘What better way to honor those that have earned that name, as well, than to give to them a shared tattoo?’”

“I joined right out of high school. If you were to ask me back then when I was 18 going on 19, I would probably tell you that I joined because I wanted to. I wanted to do something with my life. I wanted to become part of something that was bigger than myself, you know? I think a lot of guys join for that reason. If you ask me now? Probably just because I didn’t know exactly what I wanted to do with my life. I also wanted to serve because I knew that if I didn’t I’d probably regret it, be kicking myself every day for not doing it.”

“I joined the Navy and I became a corpsman. You’re Navy, you can go on Navy ships and work in Navy hospitals because you’re medical personnel. But a lot of guys like myself, they decide to go become a combat corpsman, or a FME, which stands for Fleet Marine Force, and serve with the Marines. I’ve never really experienced anything Navy. The only thing Navy about me was boot camp and corps school... I was with the Marines the whole time.”

“I was with the 1st Marine Division, and I take that with a lot of pride because it’s a very distinguished unit. You know, we get s--- done. We’re good at what we do. One of the mottos for the 1st Marine Division is ‘No better friend, no worse enemy.’ And that’s damn right; that’s true.”

“I did a lot of back-to-back deployments -- three deployments altogether. I was over there for about 26 months, not consecutive. My first deployment was definitely the roughest. After we got back from that deployment some of my Marines were like, ‘Well, Doc, we’re going back again.’ And I said, ‘Not without me, you’re not.’ Because you form that tight bond with the guys you serve with.”



“I think when I first got out I wanted to stay in the medical field. So I got into nursing school. I think I was just trying to find something that was similar to my time in the military. It took me a while, but I found out, there is nothing that’s comparable. It’s not the same.”

“I’m a trauma guy. Somebody gets their leg blown off or shot, I’m the guy that... you’re firing, and somebody gets hit, they call a corpsman up, stow your rifle, have your med bag, grab ‘em. You protect them as you take them behind a structure, and you patch ‘em up. Nursing is a very respectful field, but I can’t do it. It’s too boring for me.”

*“And so, I was like, ‘What the hell am I going to do?’ Because above all else, all I wanted to do was to help people.” A community college instructor suggested psychology. *“The more I got into psychology, the more I’m like, ‘You know, this is how I could benefit. This is how I can help guys coming back home.’”* Griffy graduated with a degree in psychology from EIU in December 2017.*