

Summary of Oral History Transcript
Student, Citizen, Soldier: Oral History and Student Veterans

Enos, Matthew

U.S. Army, Combat Engineer

Interviewer:

Interview conducted by Mr. Michael Patalano, Salem State University, on 12/04/2013

Summary of transcript:

Matthew Enos of Athol, MA joined the Army as a Combat Engineer in 2009. He was trained at Fort Riley, KS and was deployed to Iraq 2009-10 and Afghanistan 2011-12. Enos engaged in Route Clearance deployments focused on removing IEDS from Iraqi and Afghani roads. In Afghanistan his company had over one hundred IED events, one third of which were detonations on the company's vehicles. Enos was hit twice and endured firefights as well as mortar and rocket attacks. Upon his arrival in Iraq, Matt worked in the Kurdish territories in what he describes as a humanitarian effort. The bonds he made profoundly influenced him to become the person he is today. In this piece Matt discusses his experiences and how they've shaped his views. Additionally he speaks to his understanding of the U.S. public's perception of its own foreign policy.

Matthew Enos

Narrator

Michael Patalano

Salem State University

Interviewer

December 4th, 2013

at Salem State University

Salem, Massachusetts

Michael Patalano: Hello, my name is Michael Patalano. Today I am interviewing Matt Enos. He is a former combat engineer in the U.S. Army. He served in both Afghanistan and Iraq between 2009 and 2012. Today is December 4th, 2013. Thank you so much for joining us.

Matthew Enos: Thank you for having me.

MP: Absolutely. So growing up—you grew up in Athol, Massachusetts?

ME: Athol, yes, a very small town in central Mass[achusetts].

MP: So how would you describe your family dynamic growing up?

ME: Well, growing up my mom and my biological father separated—never married. They separated when I was very young, so I grew up with my mother and a stepfather who I, obviously, love dearly. He raised me, but I did get to see my father about two weeks a year growing up. Pretty close, tight knit family. I mean, I never had any major issues or anything like that, so I would say [my]upbringing was pretty good.

MP: Cool. How did it like influence your worldview as an adult? What would you say were kind of the cornerstones of your family values if you will?

ME: Definitely very loving, very accepting. It's made me a very open-minded person, so I never really have any biases or prejudices at all.

MP: That's neat. Let's see. What would you say your family's political background was?

ME: Not to sure. We never really talked about politics and stuff like that. It was usually a topic we not so much avoided as it just never really came up, but if I were to take a gander, I would say more on the side of liberal than anything.

MP: I just. I want to go back. You have two siblings.

ME: I do.

MP: Also they served—one served in the National Guard and one is serving currently, right?

ME: That is correct.

MP: Did they. Did you guys spend a lot of time together?

ME: Grow up together? Yes, my sister is about ten years older than me, so when I was young she was already off to college after she had gone through her National Guard thing. But my brother, he's only 5 1/2 - 6 years older than me, so we were pretty close growing up, and a lot closer now actually that we are older.

MP: What was your involvement in the community growing up?

ME: I wasn't all that involved. I was kind of a rebel—a little bit of a rebel especially in my middle school, early high school years. Kind of a social deviant I guess I would say, but once I got into high school was when I felt like I started maturing up a little bit more. As for community, most of what I did was through a program called "Best Buddies," actually, where we partnered up with kids in the special needs class—and like one on one buddies. We would take them out and help teach them social skills and stuff like that. I did that all 4 years of high school. That was probably the most I was involved in the community.

MP: That must have been really rewarding.

ME: I absolutely loved it. Actually, if I didn't join the military I would have been working with that still today.

MP: That's really cool. As, like, you mention yourself as a little bit of a social deviant; I can relate to that.

ME: Oh sure, absolutely.

MP: But did that affect your educational career, or did you, were able to?

ME: You mention that, and now that I think about it, yeah, actually. In high school I didn't really apply myself, I hated going to school. I hated doing homework and I was like, "You know what, when I get out of school I'm want to take a break," so I actually took a couple years break before I joined the military.

MP: Nice. I actually also took a year away. [Laughs]. Were you thinking about the military all through this process of school, or were you—did you discover it in your time away?

ME: I was thinking about the military ever since I was a child, honestly. It was kind of something I always wanted to do. I just wasn't sure how to approach it and I talked to my brother about it, and he wasn't really for it because by the time I was talking to him he had already been on two deployments, one being Afghanistan when it kicked off and the other one being in Iraq. So he wasn't really for it, but I eventually convinced him. He said, "Well, you can join as long as you don't go into the infantry."

MP: What a—so he was a main factor then influencing your decision?

ME: One of them. He influenced me to not join the infantry, and it was actually a friend of mine, his name is Adam Spring. He's actually in Special Operations now. He had convinced me to become an engineer and join active duty instead of the National Guard. He is a close friend of mine still today.

MP: Cool. So let's see. Upon joining the military what was it like adjusting? So you spent two years away from school. What were you doing for those two years? I'm sorry.

ME: Oh, that's fine. I was working full time. I was doing a little bit of carpentry and a little bit of basic construction, but, honestly, I was hating every minute of it.

MP: So then, you were jumping from construction into—into—?

ME: Straight into the army.

MP: So how was that adjustment?

ME: It was pretty abrupt, we'll say. I joined; it was January down in Missouri, and I wasn't used to it. It was very cold, and they shaved my head, threw me into these very uncomfortable boots and uniform. All of a sudden I was having to adapt to this life that I had never really known. Fortunately, I had talked to my brother and my sister before I went out. They had given me a pretty good idea of what it was going to be like, so I was a little bit prepared, but for the most part it was definitely a culture shock.

MP: Did? So you made a lot of like changes to kind of accommodate for this changing—

ME: Oh, absolutely.

MP: Did the military do anything like —did they change at all? Did they do anything to accommodate you at as far as...

ME: You know, in the beginning, no, they don't really do much to accommodate for you. There are some things, but for the most part it's like, "This is how it's going to be. You have to

conform to this way.” And then, I mean, it sounds bad, but you know there’s a reasoning behind it. You have to adopt these military customs and values. You have to adopt this kind of lifestyle, but there’s a reason behind this. It’s for cohesion so that everyone’s on the same page. It’s something that I understood going into it, so it made it a lot easier for me. Some people didn’t have that kind of insight and weren’t able to adjust as easily, though.

MP: I’m sure, and over time they probably figured it out though?

ME: Some of them, and some of them ended up going home through basic training. Didn’t make it and stuff like that.

MP: You mention basic training. How do you remember that experience?

ME: It was the longest three months of my life, and I’ve been deployed a couple times, but I remember it was the first time I had been that far away from home for that long. So I was pretty homesick, and, of course, they take away any form of communication, so a five minute phone call was a privilege to get maybe once a week maybe. So it was definitely pretty wild, and looking back at it now, I can kind of laugh at myself for how upset it made me, but I got over it pretty quick.

MP: Did you feel pretty accomplished?

ME: Oh, yeah, absolutely. I felt on top of the world when I got out. Like I was a whole new person, in a good sense.

MP: Did it like....so it made you feel more independent maybe?

ME: Absolutely. More independent, more goal oriented. I just felt like stronger, mentally stronger, physically stronger, absolutely. I was in the best shape of my life.

MP: Sweet. So....that’s kind of a jump. Sorry. So, obviously, you were given a lot of orders when you first came in because you kind of work your way up. Was it difficult kind of adjusting to always kind of taking those orders because I’d imagine there’s a pretty strong sense of discipline?

ME: They break that out of you pretty quickly because if you don’t obey, you don’t listen to orders, they—you know— physical punishment. They make you do pushups. They make you run. Some of this stuff you’re doing until you’re throwing up, so I learned very quickly not to question and, okay, you know, take orders. I mean obviously you always have your own little voice in your head that’s kind of telling you what’s right and wrong, but most of the time the Army’s not as bad as most people think it is. It’s not as bad as it used to be. Where now your leaders and your NCOs which are over you, they’re in charge of you. They’re trying to take care of you. They’re not trying to hurt you. Basic training, they’re a little hard on you, but that’s sort of to get you into that mentality. So taking orders from people, I have no problem at all.

MP: You talk about that little voice in your head. Did it ever contradict orders? Was that difficult?

ME: You know. Sometimes I'd think about of a few things, but honestly most of the time I understood why they were telling me to do what they were telling me to do and it made sense to me. So I never really had any qualms or any issues with anything I was ever told to do

MP: So your biography says you served two tours, Iraq in 2009 and 10 and then Afghanistan in 2011 and 12. These were route clearance deployments? You were a combat engineer?

ME: Yes, that's correct.

MP: So you describe your company encountering over 100 IED event. That was in Afghanistan alone. To what extent did that influence your world view?

ME: This is where I guess it will get a little heavy. This was my second deployment, and so I kind of knew what to expect going into this one. I was a little nervous because I had just come off of active duty, and there's a little rivalry between active duty and the National Guard. We kind of, when we are on active duty we are like, "Oh, yeah, the National Guard." So when I was in the Guard and getting ready to deploy with them, I was like, "Oh crap, this is going to be pretty interesting." [Laughs]. So we get out there, and the first three months were the most intense, I guess you could say, especially because we're still getting used to working with each other. So you're going out on missions 4, 5, 6, 7 times a week sometimes, and you're seeing this stuff happen every day. Just like stuff is blowing up everywhere, and so, you know, immediately for me, it numbed it. Having it happen that soon and that often, it just—after a couple of them, it just didn't affect me anymore. I'm like all right—some may say, "Hey, you're crazy for that," but it's almost like a defense mechanism. Or like, you just see things that happen so often that your body just stops registering, I guess. So, yeah, something would blow up, and some people would be all freaked out, and I still jump, but I don't, I didn't get scared. I didn't get worried. Like the second time I got blown up; I was laughing about it like 30 seconds afterward. Some people call it, might think it's a weird mentality or sick or twisted, but, honestly, it's a defense mechanism. It just keeps you from getting too amped up, too worked up, too nervous, too scared, or just maybe losing your mind, I suppose.

MP: I imagine that brought you and the people around you pretty close together.

ME: Some of the best friends I've ever had in my entire life. Absolutely.

MP: Do you think they had similar kind of coping mechanisms or was there like kind of a broad range?

ME: Honestly, everyone deals with it differently. One of the most incredible things I've found in the military is how close and how much people care for each other. From the outside people, you know,—it seems like we're hard and angry, but, honestly, a lot of us are big teddy bears.

And we're not afraid to cry together, give each other hugs, pat each other on the back, take care of each other. So if anyone ever had problems, of course, we'd pull them off missions, we'd give them time to rest and relax. We would talk to them. And there are so many different programs out there now. Like, even overseas they have people you can talk to. Even if there's no one on your base, you can skype with them, or they'll send you out there. So if someone wasn't able to cope, or were having problems with what we were doing, or were getting scared, nervous, like we took care of them. We didn't ostracize them. We didn't belittle them or anything. It was always in like a loving like "We're going to take care of you" nature.

MP: Interesting. So where were you stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan? Did they have like bases there that you were affiliated with?

ME: Yeah. In Iraq I came in and, of course, you spend a short time in what we call "hut bases." Sometimes they're called COBs [Contingency Operating Base] or they have a whole bunch of different names for them. The army loves their acronyms. But essentially what it is, it is a larger base with several different units, and sometimes branches in different countries would be on there to support Afghanistan and Iraq. And you'd come in, and you'd spend a couple of days, couple of weeks there. Usually your main body of your unit is there. And then they would kick you out to the different places you were supposed to patrol, but in Afghan... I'm sorry, in Iraq I spent most of my time in the northern section in the Kurdish territory. There is a small place called Tuz, and our FOB [Forward Operating Base] was called FOB Bernstein. It was named after an officer that was killed in combat while they were trying to establish a couple years prior to us going in there. And in Afghanistan I was in the Kandahar province right next to the border of Kandahar and Helmand at a FOB called, what was it? Sarkari Karez and it was, this was when in Afghanistan we started transitioning the names of our FOBs to the local areas in their language, so that they could understand because we were taking these FOBs and giving them over to the Afghan army, so it used to be FOB Ramrod. I wish they kind of kept that name because I think it's hilarious, but they called it Sarkari Karez, and it was in a town called Sarkari Karez Kalay, and that was in the Kandahar province.

MP: You mention turning military stuff over to the Afghanistan Army. What was it like interacting with both the locals in Iraq and Afghanistan?

ME: In Iraq they were much more welcoming because we were in Kurdish territory, and honestly, this is, my Iraq tour was a lot less hostile and aggressive than Afghanistan, but I hold on so dearly to it because it was something I felt we did very important—and we were in Kurdish area, and if you know a little bit of recent history for Iraq, the Kurds were the people that Saddam was literally performing genocide on. So what we would do is, we would go out and give humanitarian aid. We'd go out there, we'd build them schools, we'd build them fresh water wells, we'd bring them school supplies, we'd bring them food. Actually it was very sad because we'd be driving up, and you would see these bombed out rubbles of their old villages. Two hundred meters down the road, they've got all these little mud huts and stuff. You could tell

these villages, for Iraqi standards, used to be built up pretty decent, you know, cinder block houses and stuff like that, and now they're literally making their houses out of the dirt that they're living in. And it was so sad to see. And that's why I felt so—a really good feeling to be able to go in and take care of them. Some of these people we visited, even that late in the war, you know, six, seven years after we'd been in Iraq, we were the first Americans that some of these people had ever seen; so they were very welcoming of us, and they loved us. They. They. A lot of the Iraqi army in that area were Kurdish, too. We were on joint missions with them because we were still training them and stuff. They would bring us food, just like plates and plates and plates of food, and they would always be just wanting to talk with us, and interact with us, and give us chai and stuff like that. In Afghanistan it was a little bit different. Historically the Kandahar province is literally the birthplace of the Taliban, and, so they had a pretty strong presence and pretty strong influence there. So a lot of the locals, they didn't really want to talk to us. They didn't want to be around us. They knew that if they interacted with us bad things would happen to them. As for the Afghan army, as far as I know, a lot of them join the army, and then they get sent to different places to kind of avoid—you see a lot of like “Afghan soldier opens fire on U.S. soldier” because they're either extremists or Taliban infiltrates. So what they'd do is when the Afghan Army would draft soldiers, they'd send them to different places not from where they're from. Just to kind of like avoid that, I suppose. But some of them were pretty cool. They'd usually just come up and try and get stuff off us like, they'd want cigarettes, they'd want energy drinks and stuff like that. But mostly when it comes to interactions with people, Iraq was definitely where I saw a lot of amazing things, and I met a lot of amazing people.

MP: I want to backtrack just to prior—before you got there and had this experience, do you think, did you feel you were prepared for what you were going into?

ME: Not really, because honestly after September 11th and, of course, you get all of that propaganda that comes out, that depicts these people—I mean, granted a lot of it is this is a very old civilization so a lot of them, you know—I mean, we might see it, and we'd use the word “backwards,” or we'd want to use a word like “traditional,” or at least I want to do that. But a lot of them—it's not very developed out there, so as Americans, like in the public, they see this, and you get those awful terms that would come out. Honestly, I'm not going to say them on camera, but you saw a lot of the derogatory stuff that came out after that. So that sort of imprints this image of what these people are like, and then you get over there, and it's absolutely different. A lot of these people are some of the nicest people you could ever meet.

MP: You mention 9/11, and you mentioned always kind of looking at the military as an option. Seeing all of kind of America's reaction and all that escalation of tension in the Middle East, did that affect at all the way you were thinking of the military?

ME: It just made me want to go in even more. I was in seventh grade, in my world history class actually, when the towers fell—well, not when they fell, when they were struck. I remember

coming back into the class, and my history teacher was sitting there, and he says, “Guys, I’m going to put on the TV. This is literally history in the making.” He put on the TV, and we saw the images, and obviously, it was horrifying. It was an awful thing to see, but that burned this like—just desire, like you know vengeance, like you know anger, like “I need to go do something,” but I was in seventh grade. What could I do? This was actually when my brother joined the military because he had literally. He, they had turned the TV on after the first tower was hit, and while he was watching, they saw the plane hit the second tower. That changed him, and that’s why he joined. And he was in Afghanistan in 2002 after that. So, definitely seeing that solidified something inside of me that I need to go do something about this.

MP: Tell me—tell me about—a lot of the way you’ve spoken about your experience it seems like it really like shaped you, and you met a lot of people who like clearly had a very strong impact on you, and some of them you speak to till this day.

ME: Absolutely.

MP: Can you tell me about a few of them?

ME: Yeah. My first deployment actually—I’ve been in several weddings since joining active duty with my active duty friends. Two of my best friends—I was actually best man at their weddings. I see one regularly. He lives out in Washington state now. Once a year, I, no matter what, once a year I go out there and see them for a week. I’m so close with his family that while we were still stationed in Kansas, that’s where I was on active duty, I’d take leave, and instead of coming home sometimes, I’d go out to Washington and spend a week with his family, and he wasn’t even there. Like—like—we just got that close. They’re brothers, they’re best friends, they’re family. And I saw that more—more so in active duty than National Guard. Cause active duty you live with these guys. You’re with them day in, day out, every day of the week; you are surrounded by them. So you just get this bond, that I’ve just never found anywhere else where I’ve had a bond like that. No fraternity. I think the only thing close is, and if not this might surpass it, is probably firefighters. That’s probably the only thing that would ever be stronger than the bond between brothers-in-arms, I guess you could say.

MP: Pretty incredible.

ME: Yeah, it’s a good feeling.

MP: So coming back and now as a civilian kind of watching how this is playing out in the Middle East, what would you see as the best case scenario for Iraq and Afghanistan over the next ten years?

ME: This one’s tough. What happened in Iraq after we pulled out was something I think a lot of us predicted because, honestly, like you can only do so much with language barriers to train their forces. I’m not trying to like knock them down a peg or two, but they weren’t very adequate and

they, honestly don't think they were ready for us to leave. I'm not saying we shouldn't have left. I'm happy we're gone now because I've got no more friends getting hurt, but I kind of predicted—cause right after we left Iraq there was just all this riots and chaos, and honestly I think the same thing is going to happen in Afghanistan when we leave as well because I don't think they're—I mean, because if we're having trouble still with the Taliban, granted our hands are tied, the Afghan army are going to have a hard time as well. I just think that it's too bad. We've put a lot of stuff into it, but I feel like the same thing is going to happen in Afghanistan as happened in Iraq if we pull out. Iraq is still having issues.

MP: You talk about everything we've put into it, and obviously this is a huge point of contention in the U.S. How do you feel about the anti-war movement, and what was your reaction to it coming back? Because I think that I vets can kind of get a bad rap sometimes.

ME: Oh, we absolutely do. My old armory used to be right outside of Northampton, Massachusetts. And if you know anything about that area, it's a very, very, very liberal area. I can't tell you how many dirty looks I've gotten, or how many times I've been called names. And I've been yelled—I'll just be driving by with my windows down, and I'll just hear people yell shit at me out there. And it's kind of sad. I understand the anti-war movement, and I respect their side on it. Some things I do believe, though, are necessary. And. Trust me, there's a saying out there, "There's a soldier above all who prays for peace," and granted, I would love for it to be over. Just because solely for my own selfish reasons of I am sick of seeing so many people— young people get killed for certain things. But people have to understand that although people are dying over there, and some people are confused as to why we're there. There's still really, really great things that are happening. There's a lot of things we are doing that are really helping those people. The thing is it's their culture that's, that's. It's tough because we're trying to change a culture. We're trying to westernize an Islamic nation. That's very hard to do. That's very difficult because they hold on to their traditions very well, and it's understandable. They've been living like that for hundreds, and hundreds, and hundreds of years. So, I mean, as for the anti-war movement, I understand why they want it to be done. And it makes a lot of sense. But at the same time they should also understand that, we're doing some good things over there. We're taking care of things, we're giving people schools, we're giving women education, we're pushing to give women's rights and stuff like that. So the same people that are anti-war, they're also the same people that are for women's rights and stuff like that. They have to understand that, there's always going to be a good with the bad. There are some things that you just have to fight for.

MP: So you have that side of people being kind of cruel. But on the other side, I'm sure people have also articulated how grateful they are for your service. Do you? Which way do you think it usually falls? Do you feel like people are thankful and—

ME: Most the time. 99% of the time. People hear about me serving, or my friends serving, and it's followed by nothing but praise, thanks, and genuine heartfelt appreciation, and that's, you

know, made me feel great. It's kind of a little cherry on top of everything the military has helped me out with. It's just kind of like a—It makes you feel good; it makes you feel like ok, I did something. And I guess it doesn't necessarily justify things, but it helps you cope. It makes you feel like, "Okay, I've done some crazy things. I've seen some crazy things. I've tried to help people and someone's appreciative." That means a lot.

MP: Do agree that the military, coming back into civilian life did the military provide you with any sort of support?

ME: Oh, absolutely. A lot. Coming off of active duty they have a program. It's called the transition assistance program where they have a workshop. It's a couple of days long, and they teach you how to write resumes. They translate it back into regular civilian language. I guess you could say because being in the military, all of our acronyms, all of these terms, people have no idea what that even means. So they help you with literally transitioning back into civilian life. They help people getting jobs. There's so many different programs for veterans now. It's fantastic. As opposed to what it was 30-40 years ago, especially when guys are coming back from Vietnam. You know, you've seen Rambo. That's a little exaggerated, but they were just like, "All right. See you later. Good luck. Adios." You know, barely any programs. You got the V.A., and that's about it. Now-a-days there's so many nonprofits. There's so many organizations out there to help vets. I wouldn't be going to college right now if it wasn't for some of the benefits that I've gotten in the military that weren't around 30-40 years ago.

MP: That's, that's great. So religion. To some extent. I mean. Just the infighting, we were talking about the Kurds earlier and infighting between Sunni and Shiite Muslims and just, in general, just the clash between economic systems and religion seem to be the point of contention. I guess. What did you feel like you gained seeing that other viewpoint, seeing that other religion, and geopolitical system?

ME: My biggest. The biggest thing, I guess, I took out of it was I have a very good understanding about how bad it is to be extremist in any sense—in any sense at all whether it's religious, political, anything. You can't be all one thing because stuff like that's not going to work. You can't, you can't be all of just one. You can't be an extremist Muslim, you can't be an extremist Christian, you can't be an extremist liberal, you can't be an extremist conservative because you can't have all of one thing. Its just, nothing is going to work if you're all one sided. You have to have an open mind, and hopefully, hopefully, you know, the world can understand that eventually. That's my opinion. That's my biggest thing that I took out of that is, is, as a world, we're too closed minded.

MP: Sorry, wait one second here. I've got to scroll through these [looking down at questions]. Oh, you mentioned that you're kind of moving forward now. You're striving to work in pharmaceutical research eventually?

ME: Hopefully. That's one aspect of it. I just started a, the chemistry program here, and I'm concentrating in bio-chemistry, and pharmaceutical research is just one aspect of that. That's just kind of like a right off the top of, maybe I could do that. There are still things I have to research obviously, but I'm majoring in biochemistry. I'm going to minor in biology, and I'm going to see where that takes me. Keep my options open, but I absolutely love the field.

MP: Cool. Did that. Did that interest. Was that affected at all by your military service or did that come after?

ME: That came after, that definitely came after. I actually enrolled here to do criminal justice, and but that was before--I actually was enrolled here before I deployed to Afghanistan, and I took a leave of absence for my deployment. And I came back, and I'm like cool. I like carrying guns and stuff, but I don't want to go into law enforcement. Like, that's not going to be me. I don't want that to be my life, so I decided I wanted to help. I want to do things for people, and I tried to do nursing, but obviously Salem's nursing program is extremely difficult to get into. But that wasn't even all the case. It was part of it. I actually started taking classes off the nursing flow sheet. I did a couple of chemistry classes, and I just fell in love with it. It came so naturally to me, and I decided that "Okay, you know this is something I can see myself doing," and that's when I decided to make the transfer.

MP: That's awesome. It seems. I don't want to put words into your mouth, but it seems like you were inspired from that, that service and that time you put in there. I guess I've been asking you questions for a while now. Is there anything else you'd like to share?

ME: Off the top of my head, not necessarily. Just that the one thing I'd like to say is, and I've heard a lot of veterans say, a lot of people, like we've talked about earlier don't agree with the war. And don't agree with our motives, and why our country has gone there and too them I say, especially with my job, my job—I find bombs. I pull them out of the road, so people don't get killed. My main motivation for deploying, and I want people to know this, my main motivation for deploying was to keep people alive regardless of who they are, whether they're civilians, whether they're Afghan Army, whether they're our own coalition, and our own forces, and the other countries that have come to help us, NATO forces. That's why I deployed. Not for anything else. I was motivated to go after 9/11 for revenge, I guess you could say, but getting over there and seeing all these things happen, I was there to take care of people. That's ultimately why I really wanted to be there.

MP: Very cool. Matt, thank you so much.

ME: You are very welcome.

MP: This has been personally extremely impactful just having this conversation with you and we have it recorded which is awesome. Hopefully more people can see and hear your story. Thank you so much again.

ME: Mike, it's been a pleasure [They shake hands]

MP: Thank you very much. So again, I'm Mike Patalano interviewing Matt Enos, former combat engineer in Iraq and Afghanistan.