



Woman who lost brother to suicide reaches out to veterans

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MIDLAND -- A Midland woman who lost her brother to suicide is reaching out to other veterans struggling with depression.



“You make that decision before you think about it because you leave your family behind, it leaves devastation behind, you only end your pain and it's a permanent solution to a temporary problem,” Angel Munoz said, as she reminds others that there is help and hope out there.

Jeremy Arsiaga was a proud Marine, and one of many of his siblings in the military.

But when he returned mid-tour – “He came home a little different,” his sister remembers, adding that Arsiaga tried not showing that anything was wrong.

“He was very strong-willed, stubborn, I say that because it could be good qualities and also bad because you don't reach out for help as much,” Munoz said.

Then in September of 2015, just two days before his 32nd birthday, Arsiaga took his life.

He now joins his older brother, Robert, who died in action.

“What happened with Jeremy we couldn't accept,” Munoz said, noting that Arsiaga left behind a wife and children.

“It's unacceptable the way that people are treating what's going on with people like my brother. That it's shameful, they can't talk about it, that they can't reach out. It's shameful that these people feel like there's no other option. What I know of, there were two other veteran suicides in the last week and I want those families to know that even though my family's not here, I'm here,” Munoz said, now using her own experience to help save others from the heartache she faces every day.

“Ask that question, 'are you okay?' Those words right there are lifesaving,” Munoz said, as she wants all veterans to know they matter.

“There [are] other options. We're here for them. There are tons of organizations for help,” Munoz said.

Sandy Dunlap, who's the auxiliary president of the Temple & Weldon Harris Veteran of Foreign Wars Post 4149, works with veterans every day and knows of all the support systems in the area.

“The Vet Center offers counseling, there's a group called H.E.A.R.T [that] Gary Kennedy runs. There's Battle Continues with Dr. Sudip Bose, DAV is another group that you can reach out to,” Dunlap said, adding some words of advice to anyone who knows a struggling vet: “Pick up that phone and call them, because you never know, you might be saving a life.”

Dunlap would also like families who have lost loved ones to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder to know that the VFW offers support, and would be honored to post their loved one's picture on their wall that honors fallen heroes.

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