



**Honor House Founder**  
**Brian Mancini, Sergeant First Class**  
**United States Army (retired)**  
**January 18, 1979 –March 6, 2017**

Brian Mancini, the founder of Honor House, was a soldier, a healer, a visionary and so much more to those who loved him and to the Veterans whose lives have been, and will forever be, touched by the work he started. Brian's legacy will live on and grow as Veterans throughout this country continue to benefit from his vision of a "healing journey" manifested in the programs he started through Honor House.

In 1998, Brian Mancini enlisted in the United States Army where he began his Army Medical Career as a ground ambulance driver with the 1st Cavalry Division, Ft. Hood, TX. From 2001 to 2002, Brian served as a flight medic assigned to Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras. During this time he was able to interact with the people of Honduras while aiding in the fight to stop illegal drug trafficking. As a Medic on a Black Hawk helicopter, he provided emergency medical evacuation support throughout Central and South America. While in Honduras the tragedy of 9-11 happened. After four years in the military, he would leave to pursue his education and the hope of becoming a fire fighter.

Brian, like all of the Country, was profoundly impacted by the events of 9-11. He would join the National Guard volunteering to go to Iraq with a Military Police Unit. He was sent with the AZNG 860<sup>th</sup> MP Company to Baghdad for a year. He served as their Medic and trained others how to save the lives of their fellow soldiers. He was hit by a roadside IED but ignored his own wounded leg to care for other injured soldiers. He would receive his first Purple Heart and an Award for Valor. While in Iraq, Brian decided to permanently return to the regular full time Army.

After returning to the Army, Brian served as the NCO in charge of a Battalion Aid Station with the 1st Infantry Division, Fort Riley, KS attending leadership and assault school. In 2007, he returned to Baghdad, Iraq as a Medical Treatment Squad Leader and medic for the Big Red One 1-28 Infantry Battalion.

In July of 2007, while on patrol, the vehicle that Brian was riding in was hit by an Explosive Formed Penetrator or Projectile (EFP). His injuries to his upper body, and particularly his face and skull, were extensive. He would bravely undergo surgeries, too numerous to count, at Walter Reed Army Medical Center over the next three years and eight months. He would undergo a profound personal experience with his savior Jesus Christ that would set him on a mission to survive and help other Veterans. While recovering at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, he was heavily influenced by outdoor recreational therapy through Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing and was introduced to various forms of alternative therapies.



In 2009, he worked with the Potomac Workforce Education and Reintegration Program helping wounded Veterans transition out of the military into government jobs at Indian Head Naval Facility, MD.

In April of 2011, Brian was medically retired from the United States Army. Brian was awarded two Purple Hearts, the Combat Action Badge, Combat Medical Badge, Air Assault Badge, Flight Medic Badge and the Army Commendation medal with Valor.

Brian returned home to Phoenix and his family. During this time, he recounted that he was pretty much a heavily medicated "couch potato." Unable to get the same support that he had at Walter Reed, as a medic, he knew he had to take matters into his own hands. He began to implement a plan for himself involving activities such as yoga, equine therapy, fly fishing and trips into nature. He slowly was able to reduce his dependence on medication. He came to realize if this worked for him, it could work for others, and he threw himself into what would become his lifelong work to help other struggling Veterans.

In 2012, Brian co-founded the Honor House, an organization whose mission is to provide a complete transitional package that utilizes the resources from the community to meet the therapeutic and transitional challenges of our Veterans affected by combat.

Through Honor House he worked to create awareness, advocating for the needs of our returning Veterans and this generation's combat experience and transitional challenges. He would work with a local behavioral health entity to create the "Advancing Heroes" program – a 12-week intensive day program that utilizes traditional and complementary modalities. He was instrumental in the development of the Honor House "Operation Healing Journey" program, which serves Veterans in the community by helping them to establish a healing calendar and get the ongoing support and services they need. Through this ongoing program, Brian has saved the lives of numerous Veterans, healed families and created a life long alumni program to provide them with the ongoing support they need.

Brian was a tireless advocate for Veterans speaking out in the community to include the Arizona Governor's Council on Wounded Warrior Care, The Military Order of the World Wars, The American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Behavioral Health Clinicians from Maricopa County, Phoenix Police Department, Arizona Faith-Based Council and numerous other agencies and businesses. He assisted the Phoenix Fire Department in development of a training video for first responders.

His media outreach includes documenting his transitional journey and his vision for Honor House on "Shift Happens by Jonas Elrod," which aired on the Oprah Winfrey Network; and "Operation Proper Exit" a documentary aired on 60 Minutes. He was also featured in the film "Healing Waters" by SJ Hasty Creative Media. Brian has been interviewed for local newspapers and radio and was featured in an article in Reader's Digest titled "Combat Support" by Monica Soladay.



Brian was a founding member of the R4 Alliance; a national organization working to ensure that Alternative and Complementary Medicine providers serving our Veterans meet set criteria of excellence. He was recognized by the City of Phoenix when asked to represent our returning Veterans as one of the Grand Marshalls for The Phoenix Veterans Day Parade.

Brian payed the ultimate price for his country finally loosing his battle as a result of his severe physical injuries. Brian's legacy will live on in the Veterans whose lives he directly and indirectly touched. Through their children and grandchildren who might never have been born except for what Brian did for their Fathers and Mothers and through the ongoing work of The Honor House, which he founded.