



Nov. 1, 2007

## **Returning service member DeWayne Mayer the subject of ISU TBI telecast**

**Pocatello** – Staff Sgt. DeWayne Mayer, along with his wife, Jeannette, will share his story of living with traumatic brain injury (TBI) in a free public presentation titled “Heart of a Hero: A Soldier’s Return after TBI” to be telecast at various sites throughout Idaho on Nov. 8 at 10 a.m.

This telecast is part of the seventh annual “Veterans with Traumatic Brain Injury VGR Series” hosted by Idaho State University’s Institute of Rural Health, a six-week series of TBI related presentations running from Nov.1 through Dec. 13. Telecast sites are listed below.

In 2005, Mayer was injured in five military-related accidents – including a Humvee roll over, a helicopter explosion and three roadside bomb attacks -- leaving him with post-traumatic stress disorder and TBI. TBI is caused by a penetrating blow or jolt to the head that disrupts normal brain functioning. The severity of a TBI may range from mild to severe.

Following his injury, Mayer and his wife faced an even tougher battle as they began to seek treatment. His condition went undiagnosed for 16 months as he lived with increased confusion and severe short-term memory loss.

After Mayer was diagnosed with a TBI, he and Jeanette continued to struggle for suitable health care and disability benefits from the army. He eventually joined a treatment program at the Idaho Elks Rehabilitation Hospital in Boise.

Mayer has been lucky in some aspects. His wife has been a strong advocate in getting her husband the care his injury requires. But not everyone who suffers from TBI receives the help they need, says Brig. Gen. Mike Caldwell of the Oregon Military Department in an interview for *The Oregonian*, a Portland newspaper. Many veterans, he continues, are simply falling through the cracks due to a military health system that is unprepared for so many wounded soldiers.

Mayer’s story underlines the importance of improved education and awareness of TBIs and related health concerns. Also participating in the presentation will be Lt. Col. Mary Kelly,

transition assistance advisor for the Idaho National Guard, and Katie Anderson, brain injury program director at the Idaho Elks Rehabilitation Center.

The telecast will be aired from 10 a.m. to noon MST (9 to 11 a.m. PST) at the following locations:

- Pocatello: ISU campus, Eli M. Oboler Library, Room B-35
- Idaho Falls: ISU/UI campus, ISU/UI Higher Education Facility, Room 208
- Boise: ISU-Boise campus, ISU Boise Center, Room 156
- Twin Falls: College of Southern Idaho, Evergreen Bldg, Suite B-40, Room C-89
- Lewiston: Lewis and Clark State College, Sam Glenn Complex, Room SG-50
- Coeur d' Alene: North Idaho College, North Idaho Center for Higher Education, Suite 128

Seating at the telecast locations is limited so preregistration is required. For more information about this and other telecasts in the series or to make reservations, visit the Teleheath Idaho Web site at <http://telida.isu.edu>.

For assistance with making reservations or for further information, contact Donna Parker at (208) 373-1769, Russell Spearman at (208) 373-1773 or [tbi@isu.edu](mailto:tbi@isu.edu).

###

Released by: Idaho State University Office of University Relations