



VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System

Site Home > Local Features > Operation Mend

Operation Mend

Helping Heal Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans and Service Members Using Life-Changing Plastic Surgery

We just cannot say "Thank You" enough to our young Veterans coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan. Like so many other Service members from previous conflicts, they carry the scars of battle buddy's getting killed, long deployments and painful combat wounds. The scars they bear not only reflect the mental anguish but also the visible wounds of combat.

Operation Mend is an organization that changes the lives of service men and women exposed to improvised explosive devices that have left horribly disfiguring results. Envisioned by Ronald A. Katz, Executive Committee Member of the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center Board, Operation Mend offers returning service members and Veterans with severe facial injuries access to the military's best burn center and private sectors plastic and reconstructive surgeons.



"I feel it's a tremendous opportunity to give back for those who laid it all on the line for us," said Dr. Timothy Miller, Chief of the Division of Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery at David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. "Being a plastic surgeon is truly a privilege to be able to give back."

Beverly Hills surgeon Dr. Miller is often "teased" as being the plastic surgeon to the stars but make no mistake; he has a deep appreciation and understanding for what Veterans go through in battle and has a strong desire to help them out.

"I know what it's like to be shot at," said Miller.

Dr. Miller earned his military street credentials serving 2-years in Vietnam as an Army doctor. He's already provided life-changing plastic surgery to three fellow Veterans from the VHA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System and is anxious to help even more.

"Veterans don't know Operation Mend exists," said Miller. "Most people do not know this type of plastic surgery on severely disfiguring wounds can be done."

Dr. Miller hopes more Veterans who sustained severe burn injuries in Iraq and Afghanistan will reach out to Operation Mend for assistance.

According to Dr. Miller, Veterans or Service members interested in this free service need to provide documentation they sustained burn injury in Iraq or Afghanistan. They also need to send pictures to UCLA where Dr. Miller and his staff can review them. Everything from travel, hotel arrangements, medicine and hospital expenses are all provided free of charge to the Veteran or Service member who participates in Operation Mend.

If you would like more information or would like to make a donation, visit the [Operation Mend website](#) or call 310.206.0500.

