

# HEROES HELPING HEROES

Article by Chief Warrant Officer 2 Christopher Shackelford and photos by Spc. Michael Martinez  
both from 1-43 ADA



*Participants of the "Heroes Helping Heroes" 5K fundraiser run, representing all four branches of the U.S. military deployed in Southwest Asia, pose for a photograph following the run in October 2013.*



**SOUTHWEST ASIA** – Last October (2013), service members from the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines came together for a five kilometer (5K) run to help raise funds and awareness for Heart Heroes Inc. The event sponsored by "Team Hyperion" of the 1st Battalion, 43rd Air Defense Artillery (1-43 ADA) Regiment was able to raise more than \$2,700 for the Heart Heroes organization which provides "superhero" capes for children being treated for congenital heart defects.

The inspiration for the fundraiser came from a news report that had aired on "NBC Nightly News" the segment was about Heart Heroes. It featured Tandi Rasmussen from the state of New York, the mother of a 6-year-old boy named Dylan, who had received one of the capes as he faces his own medical challenges and ongoing heart surgeries.

After viewing the news report, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Christopher Shackelford and 2nd Lt. Rebecca Van Beurden contacted Heart Heroes and began planning the "Heroes Helping Heroes" event. With the support of local Navy, Air Force, Marine Corp, and Army commands, the event quickly took shape.

After receiving command approval to host the event, Shackelford and Van Beurden recruited the creative talents of Staff Sgt. Ryan Courts. His contributions to the events Facebook page design and local advertising resulted in the participation of almost 300 service members.

The air base commander along with Team Hyperion commander, Captain Kristina Allen, opened the event with a few words about the Heart Heroes organization. On the command "GO", the race participants started running, each of them wearing the name of a young heart hero living with a congenital heart defect.



The "Heroes Helping Heroes" banner will be mailed back to Heart Heroes Inc., to be shared with their team of little heroes.

"This event was a great success and a great capstone project for Team Hyperion to wrap up their deployment on a positive note," said Shackelford.

*In October 2013, service members used hand signals to show their support of the Heart Heroes program prior to participating in 1-43 ADA Team Hyperion's Heroes Helping Heroes 5K fun run to raise funds for Heart Heroes.*

