



## Meet Our New Military Makeover Veteran

### Introducing the Mahaleys from Charlotte, North Carolina

Military Makeover with Montel® proudly introduces the Mahaleys, a veteran family whose story embodies the sacrifice and dedication for this nation and their loved ones.

Born and raised in Charlotte, North Carolina, Benjamin Mahaley's journey is one of courage and commitment. His passion for service ignited at a young age, inspired by his Uncle Dan, a retired U.S. Marine Corps veteran whose apparent portrayal of loyalty solidified Benjamin's love for his country. Subsequently, witnessing his uncle's service sparked the Charlotte native's desire to contribute to something greater than himself, leading him to enlist in the United States Marine Corps in 2005 at the age of 23.

Trained in Parris Island and later stationed in Okinawa, Japan, he speaks with immense pride about discipline he learned at the early stages of his service.

During his tenure in the Marines, Benjamin served with distinction, rising to the rank of Corporal and fulfilling various roles, including Motor Transport Operator and Licensing Officer. His deployment to Al Asad, Iraq, from 2007 to 2008, exposed him to the harsh realities of combat, where he bravely navigated the challenges of securing explosive ordinance disposal (EOD) teams in high-risk environments. Unfortunately, danger was a constant during this period in Benjamin's military career, which led him to experience the death of one of his friends while at work. Nevertheless, Benjamin used the life-changing skillsets he learned during training to overcome the treacherous environments he and his team were part of during his service.

In recognition of his exemplary service, Benjamin has been awarded the USMC Good Conduct Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal (with 1 bronze service star), and National Defense Service Medal, among many other commendations.

Still, the scars of war run deep, and Benjamin returned home with physical and emotional wounds that continue to impact his daily life. Diagnosed with PTSD, anxiety, tinnitus, and hearing loss, Benjamin now finds himself struggling with the lasting effects of his service. But he wears these scars with honor as he understands that these sacrifices were made to benefit the greater good of the nation and that of his family.

Despite these challenges, Benjamin has now found solace in his role as a firefighter with the Charlotte Fire Department, where he continues to serve his community with the same dedication and camaraderie instilled in him during his military service. His commitment to others extends beyond the firehouse, as he actively engages in outdoor activities with his family.

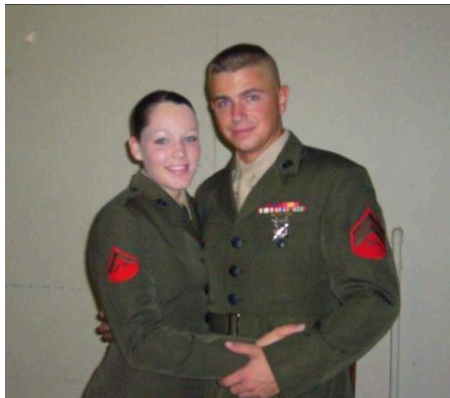
Influenced by his devotion to his country, Benjamin's love story also has military roots. This is evident in his loving marriage to Melissa, a fellow US Marine Corps veteran.

Melissa joined the USMC as a radio operator at the age of 18. Like Benjamin, she was also stationed in Okinawa, Japan. She was later sent to Bangladesh and Korea. While serving her country, Mrs. Mahaley was injured and, consequently, had hip surgery in 2009. Since then, Melissa has continued to do physical therapy as her hip gives out constantly. Aside from her physical injuries, Melissa now suffers from depression due to a long list of issues while being in the Marine Corps. In 2011, she was honorary discharged; she went to nursing school afterwards.

Both Benjamin and Melissa are the proud parents of five beautiful children: Easton (12), Ryder (11), Lyla (4), Zoey (3), and Kira (1). There's no denying that the Mahaleys exemplify the beauty and strength that define military families.

Today, Benjamin embarks on the next chapter of his journey as Military Makeover with Montel® is honored to shine a spotlight on his and his family's inspirational story. Through the generosity of our partners and the power of community, this veteran family will be able to relish the fruits of their service and sacrifice. To honor Benjamin and his family, we are set in creating a home that reflects their dutiful spirit and a love that wraps every corner of their lives.

Join us as we salute Benjamin Mahaley and his family, celebrating their bravery and American spirit.



AIRING ON 

**Tune in to Military Makeover  
Thurs. & Fri. at 7:30 a.m. (ET/PT)**



*Military Makeover with Montel®* is a very special home improvement series that aims to respect those who have served our country, rebuild the homes ---and even lives--- of these brave service men and women, and repay veterans for the service and sacrifices they've made for us.

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