



# LETTER FROM A GOLD STAR FAMILY MEMBER

*Family members of military personnel who die in service to the nation wear the Gold Star in honor of their sacrifice.*

June 26, 2017

SGT Lawrence G. Sprader, Jr., was born on July 2, 1982, at Fort Belvoir, VA. He was the youngest son of Lawrence G. and Pok S. Sprader, and the younger brother of Christopher J. Sprader.

JR, as he was affectionately known, was a very quiet young man growing up. He was very shy and at times liked to be by himself and play with his games. He did spend time with his brother Chris, and when the age of computers came out it was a very smart idea on our part to buy them each a computer. Chris was more knowledgeable than JR, but then he taught JR all about computers and they spent a lot of time together.

He received many Attendance Awards and made the Honor Roll four times during his early years in school. He was not a big fan for doing homework, but he never neglected to get it finished.

We enrolled him in Taekwondo; however, it was short lived, as he only stayed long enough to get his yellow belt. He did not play sports, and like his dad, he really was not crazy about Physical Education classes.

Upon graduation from high school, he decided to enlist in the US Army, and he left for basic training two weeks after he graduated high school. His initial welcome to the Army was one that he did not like. His letters home were those of a young man that wished he had not made the decision he did, and he realized that it wasn't so bad living by mom and dad's rules and he wanted to come





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back home. As the years progressed and his letters continued to arrive, we could see how much he had matured in the Army and he spoke of making it his career.

He deployed to Iraq on two occasions and returned home safely. After his second tour, he was reassigned to Fort Hood, Texas. During this assignment, he was enrolled in the Warrior Leadership Course, and while attending a course he became disoriented and dehydrated on the land navigation course and subsequently passed out from the heat and was found four days later. It was later determined by the Army that his death was a result of poor leadership by his superiors.

Not a day goes by that we do not miss JR. We lost a loving son, his brother lost his best friend, and his nephews lost their uncle. We often wander what his wife and children would be like. His death was hardest on his mother because no matter where he was stationed he never forgot her on those special occasions, especially

As for us, 100 years from now we would hope that this world would be at peace. That the killing and all the wars would stop and everyone could live together and be free to travel wherever they would like to go without fear of terrorism.

Sincerely,

Lawrence and Pok Sprader

Gold Star Parents of

SGT Lawrence G. Sprader, Jr.

July 2, 1982 – June 12, 2007

