

“High-Speed” Private Helps Save Command Sergeant Major’s Life

By Major Mike Indovina

A private’s quick response helped save the life of a command sergeant major stationed at Camp Victory, Baghdad, Iraq.

On 3 April 2008, Private First Class Keon Christie, 18th Military Police Brigade, was walking to a bus stop en route to work when he saw a sport utility vehicle veer off the road. There was a Soldier slumped over the steering wheel. Christie attempted to open the doors of the vehicle, but they were all locked. Without hesitation, he used his M4 rifle to break a window, thereby gaining access to the Soldier. Several other Soldiers arrived on the scene. A captain, a specialist, and a Federal Bureau of Investigation agent helped pull the driver from the vehicle.

The driver—a command sergeant major—appeared to be suffering from a heart attack or stroke. As some of the rescuers began performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), the victim slipped in and out of consciousness.

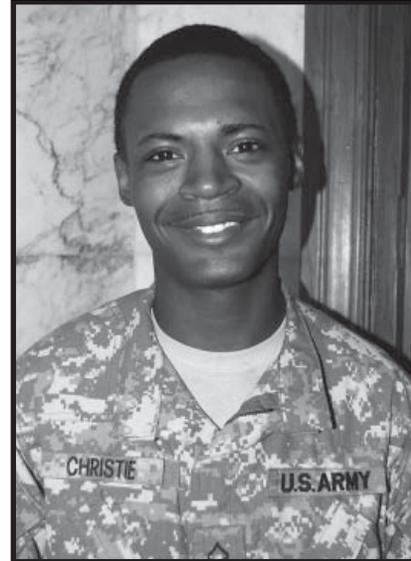
“I did not feel comfortable doing the CPR because I was not certified in the process, but [I] assisted in the recovery of the Soldier when he came to,” said Christie. “I would ask [the command sergeant major] if he knew where he was and what had happened.”

As the group continued CPR, medics from the Camp Victory troop medical clinic arrived and transported the victim to the clinic, where he was stabilized. He later returned to the United States to continue his recovery.

After the incident, Christie said he did not want to be a Soldier who “just walks away” when someone is in need. “Where I come from, most people that see this type of situation just look and stare and don’t do anything about it,” said Christie. “But I did not want to be one of those people.” “Because of this [incident], I am now interested in taking courses to become certified in CPR for future use,” he added.

“PFC [Private First Class] Christie is ‘high-speed,’” said a noncommissioned officer from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 18th Military Police Brigade. “Christie is a new Soldier to the Army, and he did the right thing and what is expected of a Soldier.” “After being a military policeman for several years now, most people I have observed just continue on and watch and don’t take action,” he added. “Christie taking action definitely contributed to the sergeant major still being alive today.”

As a result of his actions, Christie has been recommended for the Army Commendation Medal.



Private First Class Keon Christie helped save the life of an Army command sergeant major who had suffered an apparent heart attack or stroke while driving.

Major Indovina is the public affairs officer for the 18th Military Police Brigade.