

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation for Nicholas Cohen, who served under my command as a First Lieutenant in the United States Army. I got to know Nick over a period of twenty months, from June 2000 through January 2002, while he served as a Platoon leader in the Company I commanded as a Captain in the Army's 82nd Airborne Division. In his four years in the Army, Nick became a first-rate officer; his dedication and commitment to his country and to his soldiers was outstanding. Nick's soldiers respected him because he was one of the Army's highly-trained elite Rangers, but they admired him and aspired to be like him because of the kind of leader that he was. Just as Nick was a great asset to his country and to the men he commanded, I am confident that he will be a great asset to the medical field and to the patients under his care.

Of the five Platoon leaders in our Company, all of whom were hand picked to lead one of the toughest fighting units in the Armed Services, Nick distinguished himself as a leader among leaders. To understand the faith that I placed in Nick's leadership abilities, I must explain the Executive Officer position, the highest position that a First Lieutenant can occupy. In times of war, should something happen leaving me incapable of command, it is the Executive Officer who takes command of the entire Company. I promoted Nick to the Executive Officer position in my Company because I knew I could trust him with the lives of my men.

Besides being my replacement should the need arise, as Executive Officer, Nick was responsible for the day-to-day welfare of my men. He was absolutely thorough in his planning for medical emergencies. He insured that whatever mission we were on, medical evacuation was close at hand. In all my years in the Army, I have never seen any officer do a finer job of taking care of his men than Nick.

What I personally admired the most about Nick was the genuine concern he showed at all times for his soldiers. To Nick, the welfare of his men was always the top priority. I can recall several instances when he went above and beyond the call of duty in taking care of them. One example involved a soldier in his Platoon named Khoi Tran, a Vietnamese citizen who had come to the U.S. with a green card, hoping to become a citizen. Private Tran, who sent the bulk of every paycheck back to his wife and kids in Vietnam, had been waiting over two years for his citizenship so he could bring his family to America. When Nick found out about Tran's situation, he drafted a letter for our Battalion Commander to sign, urging the INS to expedite Tran's case. The letter was signed and sent, and within a month, the INS called Tran to set up an interview. What had taken years of waiting was brought to a swift conclusion by Nick's action. Tran has since become an American citizen and has brought his family over to join him.

Although Nick has left the Army to study medicine, his commitment to his soldiers is still foremost in his mind. Despite an academic schedule that must be rigorous, Nick made time to fly down to Fort Bragg to see our Battalion off when we were deployed to Afghanistan this past Christmas. He provided the departing soldiers with emotional support as he helped them pack and prepare for deployment in a war of indeterminate length. When one of his soldiers wrote to Nick expressing concern that with the

Nation's focus on Iraq, people may have forgotten about the men still serving in harms way in Afghanistan, Nick did more than offer sympathy. Within a month of arriving in Kandahar, the soldiers in our company began receiving packages and letters from students at Nick's college. Nick had encouraged his fellow students to write us and to contribute money for care packages to send us. Nick then brought this effort to his neighborhood in New York when a newspaper article reported on his mission. So far we have received countless numbers of care packages and well over 2,000 letters forwarded by Nick, with batches more still arriving every week. His letters have been so appreciated by the men in our Battalion, many of whom were not receiving letters from home. It is difficult to put into words the gratitude that these soldiers felt to learn that people back home were thinking of them and cared for their well-being.

Nick's dedication to the welfare of others, his commitment to excellence, and his effectiveness as a leader make him an outstanding candidate for medical school. I could not recommend him more highly for a seat in your incoming class.

Please contact me at the address below if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

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