

# Senior service fellow thanks, inspires

*By Kathleen T. Rhem, Defense Logistics Agency News*

## Wounded officer thanks, inspires logistics professionals

September, 11, 2009 -- Double-amputee Lt. Col. Greg Gadson, a former Army football player, was on the sidelines as honorary co-captain when the New York Giants won the Super Bowl on Feb. 4, 2008, and many of the Giants players said they couldn't have done it without Gadson's inspiration.

But Gadson said he wouldn't have been there if it weren't for the team of logistics professionals that contributed to saving his life in Iraq in 2005.

As guest speaker at a 9/11 remembrance event at the McNamara Headquarters Complex on Sept. 11, Gadson said that he and all warfighters owe a debt to the people supporting them from far behind the front lines.

"I'm truly in debt to those of you in the defense logistics arena. I consider myself blessed beyond my wildest expectations because I stand before you today," he said. "If it wasn't for the great work of many of you that will never get the credit, I wouldn't be here today."

Gadson was a field artillery battalion commander in 1st Infantry Division when his vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb in May 2005. Both of his legs have been amputated as a result of injuries he suffered that day. He said he credits the military logistics system as having a hand in saving his life because of the medical supplies and equipment that were available in Iraq.

He became an honorary member of the New York Giants during the 2007-08 season after attending the team's game against the Washington Redskins and giving an inspirational speech to the players.

Gadson was invited by Giants wide receiver coach Mike Sullivan, a teammate of Gadson's at West Point in the late 1980s. After an 0-2 start to the season, the Giants won the game against the Skins, the start of a 10-game winning streak and a storybook season that culminated in the Super Bowl championship.

In the speech he gave at the McNamara Headquarters Complex, Gadson said combat troops are able to fight America's battles because of the strong support system behind them.

"It's your hard work, it's your service and it's your sacrifice that makes it possible to continue to serve, for us to carry on this fight," he said. "You see, the U.S. service member goes forward willing to make the ultimate sacrifice because he knows that

his country is behind him, and you all here represent what that commitment means."

The McNamara Headquarters Complex remembrance event was sponsored by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and also featured remarks by that organization's director and deputy director, as well as two moments of silence to honor those killed in the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and patriotic music.

The ceremony took place on the 2nd floor atrium above the main entrance, and employees lined the railings on all four stories of the building to participate. Many wiped away tears and some softly sang along during a playing of Lee Greenwood's "Proud to be an American." The song has come to symbolize the outpouring of patriotism and military support that followed the attacks.

DTRA Director Kenneth Meyers III, who also is director of U.S. Strategic Command's Center for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction, urged those in attendance to maintain that spirit of patriotism.

"Sometimes eight years seems very far away, sometimes it seems like just yesterday. But we all must continue to remember that day, to remember the friends and family we lost," he said. "Today is a special day of remembrance. But don't limit your thoughts to just one day, remember those people every single day; remember them always."

Gadson echoed that theme in his remarks.

"It's important for us to remember what we're [fighting for ] on the lines – the front lines and the rear lines," he said. "We're fighting for our freedom. We're fighting to deny the extremism and show that the values that we have in America can exist everywhere."

Gadson finished his remarks with an inspirational message for the Defense Logistics Agency employees at the ceremony.

"Realize that you are part of a team. And often as team members you will never get the credit you deserve, but I thank you from the bottom of my heart as we remember those that perished on 9/11," he said.