

The following tribute to Lieutenant Colonel Alan Hinson by Congressman Bachus was printed in the Congressional Record on May 27.

As we prepare to honor our veterans this Memorial Day, it is an appropriate time to recognize the service of Lieutenant Colonel Alan L. Hinson for his dedicated work as the Executive Director of Operation Grateful Heart in Alabama.

Alabama has a proud heritage of supporting our troops in uniform and our returning veterans. Lieutenant Colonel Alan Hinson upheld this tradition when he was appointed by Governor Bob Riley to serve as the Executive Director of Operation Grateful Heart. He has been responsible for ensuring that all military personnel and their families receive appropriate recognition, tangible support, and neighborly care. The program provides caring assistance for our troops, both as they fight terrorism and defend freedom overseas and when they return home and require employment and veterans services in their communities.

Lieutenant Colonel Alan Hinson's concern and compassion have come from his own experiences. He served in the U.S. Army from January 1969 until June 1991. He was a helicopter pilot during the Vietnam War, flying combat aerial missions for the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion, as well as direct support missions in support of ground troops in the III Corps and V Corps regions of South Vietnam. He also served several tours of duty at Fort Rucker, Alabama as both a flight and ground instructor. Later in his career, he returned to his basic branch of Field Artillery, where he served with the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea, 3rd Armored Division in Germany, 2nd Army in Atlanta, and Army Forces Command in Atlanta.

In 1995, Lieutenant Colonel Alan Hinson returned to Alabama, where he served military veterans and their families for nine and a half years as counselor and case manager with the Alabama Intensive Veterans Employment (ALIVE) Program. The ALIVE program helped veterans encountering employment barriers return to the workforce by providing vocational assistance, job-specific training, work experience, and other supportive services. From 2005 through April 2007, Lieutenant Colonel Alan Hinson supplied assistance to Alabama citizens who had lost their jobs either from trade-related layoffs or as a result of disasters such as Hurricane Katrina.

Lieutenant Colonel Alan Hinson is married to the former Celia Marie Sullivan of Troy, Alabama.

They have one daughter, Rochelle Hughes, a nursing instructor at Mississippi University for Women in Columbus, Mississippi; one son, Chief Warrant Officer Scott Hinson, currently serving with the 3rd Infantry Division at Forward Operating Base Falcon in Iraq; and five grandchildren.

Lieutenant Colonel Alan Hinson has devoted his life to his family, his country, and our brave men and women in uniform. As he retires from his service as Executive Director of Operation Grateful Heart, it is now our welcome opportunity to salute him for his dedication to the United States of America and to the well-being of our troops and veterans.