

August 20,2007

Ms. Elizabeth Joyce Freeman
Director
Veteran's Administration Palo Alto Health Care System
3810 Miranda Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94304

Dear Ms. Freeman:

On June 13,1952 I was shot through the head during Korean War combat. The bullet went through the skull behind the ears, blew off the back of the skull, damaged the occipital lobe, and left me legally blind. I lost 75% of the visual field in both eyes. After a lengthy stay in an Army hospital., I was discharged without the benefit of any rehabilitative therapy for my loss of vision.

Fifty-five years later I discovered the Veteran's Administration Western Blind Rehabilitation Center (WBRC) in Palo Alto, California.

I was admitted to the Center on January 10, 2007: The staff and I soon realized that their standard program was geared to helping people suffering from vision loss due to eye pathology, not loss of vision due to traumatic brain injury.

Therapy for loss of vision due to eye pathology relies heavily upon magnification devices. A person with vision loss due to traumatic brain injury does not need magnification aides, but does need to be trained to bring those objects, which he may not see, into the undamaged portion of his visual field.

Upon realization that the normal curriculum at the Center was not appropriate for traumatic brain injury vision loss, Elizabeth Jesson, WBRC Director, removed me from their standard program and assigned Visual Therapist, Scott Johnson as my coordinator.

Mr. Johnson employed a system developed in Australia by Gayle Clark entitled Neuro-Vision Technology. This system trains a person to move the undamaged portions of his visual field to cover areas where vision is unpaired.

Even though I was fifty-five years late in receiving any visual therapy, I feel this system was beneficial. The Neuro-Vision Technology system would be even more successful if applied as soon as the WBRC becomes responsible for a veterans rehabilitation.

Mr. Johnson has been assigned to develop a program for the WBRC utilizing the Neuro-Vision Technology System. This program will give the WBRC the capability of providing vision loss rehabilitation to the large number of veterans who have received traumatic brain injuries from roadside bombs and other explosive devices in the O.I.F. and OEF.

Please lend your support and encouragement to this proposed program when it comes to your attention.

Sincerely,

Rodger L. Thisdell
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cc: Elizabeth Jessen, Director WBRC
Larry Martinez, Blinded Veteran's Association Secretary
Nicholson, Department of Veteran's Affairs
Congressman Adam Schiff, California 29* District