



All the Best Podcast
Episode 73: “Standing Where Duty Requires”
Featuring former Marine and Veteran Advocate, Cole Lyle

Cole: June 27th, 1989. The Marines were famous for their precision and for not making mistakes. Of course, on the one night we were in attendance, one of the Marines dropped his rifle. I was hoping a note from his Commander-in-Chief might help.

Dear Corporal, Last night's drill was very special. I want to thank you and the others in the platoon for a super performance. Colonel Pace told me that you were the guy selected by his peers for that key inspection role. Quite an honor, well-deserved. Please thank all involved in the drill. Sincerely, George H.W. Bush P.S. Don't worry about anything. You did A-OK.

George: In the first place, I believe that character is a part of being President.

Barbara: And life really must have joy.

Sam: This is "All the Best." The official podcast of the George and Barbara Bush Foundation. I'm your host, Sam LeBlond, one of their many grandchildren. Here, we celebrate the legacy of these two incredible Americans through friends, family, and the foundation. This is "All the Best."

George: I remember something my dad taught me. He said, "Write your mother, serve your country," and he said, "tell the truth." And I've tried to do that in public life. All through it.

Barbara: You are a human being first, and those human connections with children, with friends are the most important investments you will ever make.

George: We stand tonight before a new world of hope and possibilities for our children. A world we could not have contemplated a few years ago.

Sam: On behalf of our family and the George and Barbara Bush Foundation. This is "All the Best."

Cole Lyle is an advocate for veterans. He has served as a special assistant in the Department of Veterans Affairs, providing senior VA leadership with strategic advice about the VA's priorities in its relationship with Congress. Prior to that, Cole served as the military legislative assistant for U.S. Senator Richard Burr of North Carolina. Prior to Senator Burr's office, Cole was the assistant director of mental health programs with The American Legion National Headquarters based in Washington, D.C., championing veterans' programs that would assist the Legion's two million members. Before moving to Washington and while in school full-time at Texas A& M, Cole wrote a piece of federal legislation called the PAWS Act and lobbied on its behalf. He worked with members of Congress, veterans service organizations, and outside interest groups to lobby for the legislation, testifying before two congressional committees. Cole was honorably discharged from the United States Marine Corps in 2014, after serving for 6 years, completing 1 tour in Afghanistan during 2011. Cole, thank you for joining us today on "All the Best."

Cole: Thanks for having me.

Sam: Cole, our podcast is based on the legacy of service left behind by my grandparents, George and Barbara Bush. And I would argue that there is no greater act of service than joining our Armed Forces and protecting our freedoms. I'd like to start with this, Cole, what inspired you to join the Marine Corps?

Cole: Well, it's an interesting question because neither of my parents or any of my aunts, uncles, anything like that, served. The last family members that did were actually my grandfather who was a CBY pilot in World War II and my other grandfather served in the Army but not in any combat period. To be honest with you, it was just kind of, you know, I was an Eagle Scout. I was actively involved in service projects, community projects, and the idea of service appealed to me at a young age. I will also note that I grew up with my mom in a single-parent household, two older sisters. And so, she did kind of also say, "Hey, look, when you graduate high school, you're either getting a job, going to college, or join the military. You're not staying in my house." So I was self-aware enough at the time to know that, you know, I probably wouldn't do well in college if I were to go that avenue and probably could have used a little bit of discipline so the Marine Corps worked out for me. And that's really, I think, what ultimately led me to do that.

Sam: Well, Cole, correct me if I'm wrong here but a big part of your story started after you left the military and began experiencing challenges stemming from PTSD. Can you talk to us about your transition from the Marine Corps to civilian life?

Cole: I was in the Marine Corps Reserve for six years. I got activated, deployed to go to Afghanistan. The whole deployment was 2010 to 2011. Came back and had some issues with post-traumatic stress amongst other things. At the time, I was married. The symptoms and the issues had negative effects on my interpersonal relationships. They had negative effects on my work performance on any number of different things. But I still had a few more years in the Reserve so, you know, I went to the VA in Dallas and the outpatient center in Fort Worth, went to a vet center, which is kind of a VA-funded, VFW if you will, like guys can just go and have kind of informal counseling, peer engagement, that sort of stuff. Didn't feel like really any of that was working. In fact, the pills, I think, made it worse. I had a couple of my friends commit suicide as a result of, you know, overprescription on what are called SSRIs that the VA prescribed, which, ironically, aren't even FDA-approved for post-traumatic stress. There's no actual pill specifically for post-traumatic stress. It's for depression, or anxiety, or things like that and they just think it's gonna work for the issues specific to that.

So in 2014, I was going through a pretty difficult period in my life. I was going through a pretty nasty divorce, wasn't in school. I've just gotten out of the Marine Corps. And so, I attempted to commit suicide one night. And one of my Marine friends showed up with some Whataburger, and some beer, and some DVDs, back when Netflix was still on DVDs, and showed up at the right time. The next day, I kind of, you know, just decided that I really didn't want to be a statistic. I said to myself, there's really no good reason why I should have considered that in the first place, other than I was just... It's kind of hard to describe. There is a chemical aspect to it where your mind is just kind of wired the wrong way and that's the whole point of trying to fix, I shouldn't say fix, but to address post-traumatic stress is to kind of get your brain rewired the way it's supposed to be, right. Different people have different ideas of what that means but I have tried a couple of ways. They didn't work for me.

So I had a friend of mine who had a service dog, so I started asking him questions about how he got his service dog, also a German Shepherd. After a little bit of research, realized that the VA doesn't provide funding for service dogs or didn't, at the time, at all. I went to a couple of nonprofits and said, "This is an option I'd like to pursue." Wait times for these nonprofits, they're doing the work that the VA should be doing, were over a year. I didn't feel like I had

that long to wait so a buddy of mine, who I served in the Marine Corps with, was a dog handler. When he got out, he went into training police dogs and things like that. But he had a friend of his, very, very close, they committed suicide and as a result, he kind of wanted to try this out, to train service dogs for post-traumatic stress, TBI, depression. And so, I was kind of one of his guinea pigs and he was, at the time, going through the Assistance Dogs International accreditation process. I went to the litter that I chose Kaya out of and he said I can work with, even at 12-weeks-old, they can kind of get an idea, based on how the dogs are interacting with their littermates and things like that. This one, this one, this one, and this one, and Kaya happened to be the only female and I wanted a female, so I got her. It took about 9 months of training to get her fully trained, about \$10,000 of my own money. And that's how I got her and she helped immediately. Now, I mean, I still have my issues but certainly, life would be much more difficult in dealing with these symptoms than they would be without her. The worst thing she's gonna do is have an accident on the floor, right, whereas like pills could exacerbate significantly these issues that you deal with. And so, I chalk it up as a win. You know, I don't take pills anymore or anything like that.

You know, guys when they get out, the biggest thing is they really lose their peer support structure pretty immediately. They lose their chain of command pretty immediately. They lose their sense of purpose. Some do. I mean, some go and pretty immediately go into other service-focused things like being a police officer, being a firefighter, volunteering, working with a nonprofit, but a lot of guys, they really do lose that sense of purpose. And one of the things the dog does for you that other forms of treatment don't necessarily do is even though it's very, very small, they do provide that sense of purpose, like I have to get out of bed today to take care of this dog, like I have to feed it. I have to walk it. I can't just sit around like a bum. I mean, to a certain extent you still can but the dog is very much like an impetus to get out and do things. The other great benefit is if there is a moment of weakness even after you get the dog and, you know, you've got a pistol in your mouth and you're sitting there thinking, "Nobody's gonna miss me. Nobody's gonna care." You look at this dog and you're like, "Oh, the dog will miss me, maybe that's something."

So that's why I'm such a passionate advocate for it because I've personally benefited from Kaya. I know it can work. If you need 20 scientific peer-reviewed studies to convince you that dogs can be therapeutic, then clearly, you've never owned a dog before and that kind of parlayed over into, you know, I went to D.C. because after, you know, after I tried to commit suicide in 2014, I kind of locked myself in a room, it sounds crazy, for a day and a half. And I said I'm not gonna leave the room until I have a plan on what I want to do, kind of short, medium, long term, and then, you know, an actionable plan to be able

to do that while also still trying to deal with these symptoms. And what I came up with was what I've kind of always come up with was public service and how can I do that? And at the time, the only person I knew that was involved in public policy at all was a friend of mine who had volunteered on Ted Cruz's 2012 campaign so I reached out to her and said, "Hey, this is kind of what I want to do. What do you suggest?" She said, "Look, you're in a great position because you have nothing tying you down. As horrible as the last couple of months have been for you, stop looking at it as I have nothing and start looking at it as I have the opportunity to do a lot of stuff," right. And not many people get that kind of reset where they can just say, "I want to go a completely different direction in my life."

And so, you know, I took her advice, went to D.C., interned for Senator Cruz, interned for The Heritage Foundation, and then went back to Texas to Texas A& M. And I had Kaya when I was in D.C. interning. You know, one day I was walking down the street and Senator Thom Tillis sees me with the dog, who happens to be on the VA Committee. He's on the Armed Services Committee. And a lot of people when they see me with Kaya, they're like, "He's not blind. He doesn't have a limb missing. Like why does he have a service dog?" So he asked me and recognizing me, I'm kind of an ambassador for the issue. I'm always happy to indulge and talk about it. And so I started telling him and I said, "The VA doesn't provide funding for it." And he was like, "What do you think we should do about it?" And I said, "Well, you're the policymaker, you tell me. Like you're on the Committee of Jurisdiction. Like what do you think we should do? I mean, you've got a lot more authority to deal with this than I do." So he says, "Well, come by my office and we'll have a discussion."

And I came by and he met Kaya and it was nice. Ultimately, I came away from that meeting because I didn't have a solution to present to him. I didn't have something to put in front of him. I just had a problem. You know, members of Congress and people in government, they get that 20 times a day, where they say, this is a huge problem, it needs to be fixed. But nobody has a viable solution on how to fix it. So I walked away from that meeting and I said, you know, at least, he's willing to listen. And if I have a solution that I can put in front of him or other members of Congress, maybe somebody will take the bait.

So I wrote up a little white paper and I didn't have the specific language because, at the time, I hadn't worked in Congress. I've read bills but I didn't know how to put one together. So I kind of had a broad strokes analysis of the problem and specifically, what I thought we should do about it and, like, you know, how to pay for it and things like that. Started shopping it around with the

network I'd built up in Senator Cruz and The Heritage Foundation. A buddy of mine who at the time was the chief of staff for then-Congressman Ron DeSantis said, "Yeah, I love this idea. And by the way, we have a huge service dog organization in our district, K9s For Warriors, down in Ponte Vedra. Come in and we'll talk about it."

You know, it took four, five months after that to get a draft because, you know, you have to speak with interest groups and you have to speak with committees and you have to speak with all sorts of different people to get buy-in and to get some juice behind the effort. It was ultimately introduced, actually five years ago at this point, almost to the day. Keep in mind I was still at Texas A&M this whole time so I was flying back and forth like once or twice a month, to meet with members of Congress to advocate for this bill. And I wasn't doing this on behalf of any organization or anything like that. It was just me believing in a good idea and wanting to see it done. That cost me another about \$10,000 through all this effort but I was happy to do it, obviously. It was a cause I was passionate about.

And so, introduced it, ended up in 2016, which as you all remember, maybe not as much as 2020, but in 2016, it was a very contentious election year. I had over 200 plus co-sponsors in the House version of the bill, several committee members on Committees of Jurisdiction. There were 10 co-sponsors in the Senate version, including Marco Rubio, who had until recently been a Republican candidate for president, and Tim Kaine, who was the vice-presidential candidate for Secretary Clinton, so very bipartisan, even in a heated election year. I called it the PAWS Act because it stands for Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers, because I figured, you know, if you have puppies and wounded service members in the name of a bill, it's hard for anybody to say no to it. That's like voting against grandmother and apple pie, right. So that was kind of from soup to nuts, how I went from turning what could have been a tragedy into trying to help other veterans who are going through the same thing. I should note that while I was doing this the entire time, I had people reaching out to me, just out of the woodwork coming through the whole time saying, "Thank you so much. My dog has helped me. It's not a service dog but my dog has helped me so much in this battle." And that was, more than anything, even on the days that it was really hard to keep going because as I said, I was funding it all myself so there was financial stress, I was taking like 20-hour semesters at A&M so there was academic stress, I still was holding down two part-time jobs so there was job stress, so that's what really kept me going is because there was a lot of grassroots support for the effort and soon to be a lot of official support for it.

Sam: Well, Cole, thank you for sharing that story, amazing to hear your journey. I have a couple of questions. One being, what is the current state of access to service dogs provided to members of the U.S. military?

Cole: In 2016, Congressman DeSantis decided he was gonna run for governor. And Congressman Roe, who at that time was the chair of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, they decided to try to pass kind of a watered-down version of what we originally worked for a number of different reasons, which, you know, I was okay with, because it's a foothold on a beachhead. I didn't think that this was gonna be just very quick, "Hey, we're gonna get this passed quickly," right. But I'll take what I can get. Unfortunately, you know, it died in the Senate. But the writing was kind of on the wall, ironically, for a couple of different reasons. The VA really was the one that was pushing back on the idea the hardest. So right now, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has the authority on a case-by-case basis in extreme circumstances, to provide veterans with a service dog. He has a dog as a prosthetic, for all intents and purposes. In some cases, they will provide the tools needed, veterinary care, or certain dogs but by and large, service dogs are still not widely accessible to the veteran population.

At first, the VA's objection was that there wasn't enough scientific evidence to prove that dogs were therapeutic, which is a little maddening to be honest because there was a bill passed in 2010, and really a huge pioneer in the service dog movement was a guy named Luis Montalvan, who was a veteran. He has a book, "Tuesday Takes Me There." I think the other one is Next Tuesday. His dog was named Tuesday, obviously. He worked with then-Senator Al Franken, got the VA to actually do its own study on the efficacy of service dogs helping for post-traumatic stress or other things like that. It was supposed to be a 3-year study, cost \$5 million, and here we are 11 years later, it's still not finished. It's cost over \$20 million and they have placed exactly 0 dogs.

Now, private companies, K9s For Warriors, for instance, did a study with Purdue University, which found obviously, it had positive effects on post-traumatic stress in veterans. There are other studies out there, I mean, so the excuse that there's not enough evidence really doesn't hold any water anymore. The real reason behind the scenes that I've since come to figure out is that the VA doesn't want to be on the hook for veterinary costs. And they don't want to be on the hook if a veteran who has a dog loses the dog for whatever reason. The dog either passes away or just any reason. They don't feel like they want to keep providing dogs. There are easy solutions to all these problems if there was the will to do it. I worked for a member of Congress at this point. I worked for the VA at this point. If people wanted this to happen, it could happen. I think another thing that kind of feeds into this problem is that most people that run

the Veterans Health Administration, while they do great work, and I'm not disparaging their work at all, I think they're doing what they think is right for veterans in a veteran community. You know, they all went to med school and they all got taught the same thing on how to deal with these mental health issues, so I think there's an aversion to some of these more holistic approaches because it's not what they know. It's not what they were taught and it's not what they spent years and hundreds of thousands of dollars learning.

Now, Congress, they passed S.785, which is the Commander John Scott Hannon Act last year, which was a comprehensive bill to deal with veteran suicides, mental health issues which provide a certain amount of grant funding for these kinds of holistic approaches, and in conjunction with other lines of effort of VA, I think you're gonna see good, positive results out of that. You know, I testified in front of a House Committee back in 2016 about this and I said, "If folks are serious about this..." Look, at the time, it was 22 veterans a day. Now, you know, it's been reduced to 20 veterans a day that are committing suicide. "If we're serious about this, we need to be honest with ourselves and the truth hurts. What we've been doing is not working."

Now, the VA will come back and say, and rightfully so, and I agree with it, that 14 of the 20 veterans that commit suicide every day are not engaged at VA. They don't get their healthcare or their benefits from VA. So the majority of people that do get help at VA and do engage, show willingness to want to work on themselves, they do not commit suicide. It's a complicated problem and I want to be clear that at this point, I don't think service dogs are a silver bullet to fix the problem. I think it's a multifaceted, complicated issue when you're dealing with what's inside people's heads. But if you want to be serious about attacking this suicide epidemic, you have to explore options that you haven't tried. The VA, I liken to a massive ship with a very small rudder. It takes it a long time to change on big issues like this. Sometimes, Congress can kind of kick them in the butt and make it happen a little faster. It's a complicated issue. I still continue to believe that there are veterans who would not have committed suicide today if they had access to a dog. Period.

Sam: It sounds like there might be help on the way. You said earlier that we're almost five years in to when the PAWS Act was introduced. Where do we stand right now in getting it passed?

Cole: The bill as written back in 2016, obviously, didn't get passed, even though the Secretary has the authority on a case-by-case basis to grant service dogs to veterans in extraordinary cases. It's been reintroduced in subsequent Congresses. The latest version is 1022, introduced by Congressman Rutherford, you know, that same Florida district with K9s For Warriors in it. You can call

your member of Congress, call the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. I don't think a Senate version has been introduced of that bill. But it's a great bill and it's fairly identical to the one that was originally introduced back in 2016. Time will tell if it gets passed. Congress is designed to be difficult to pass laws unless it's a crisis or more of a sexy kind of an issue that gets a lot of political traction. So I hope it gets passed. There's really no reason why it shouldn't pass because if everybody got into the same room, the objections that have been noted could be easily overcome. Call your member of Congress, if your listeners feel so inclined. Call your member of Congress, tell them to support H.R.1022, sponsored by Congressman Rutherford out of Florida. And if it is passed, I firmly believe that it will have a significant, positive effect on veterans' suicide. I think service dogs can save lives. Like I said, if your listeners feel inclined, call your member of Congress and let's get this done.

Sam: Time will tell.

Cole: Yeah, time will tell.

Sam: Cole, I think everybody knows how big of a problem PTSD is in the veteran community and you bravely spoke up when you realized you were struggling with PTSD. And you've continued to speak up and champion this cause on behalf of those who aren't speaking up, for one reason or another. Do you have a message for people suffering from PTSD or mental illness that don't have the same voice as you?

Cole: You know, yeah, and the message is no shame in the mental health game. Do what you got to do to get help. I mean, if you're in crisis, there are resources available to you. You know, the military teaches us, the Marine Corps specifically, one mind, any weapon. If you use your mind, you're able to use basically anything as a weapon. I can't tell you how many hours we would practice immediate action drills or remedial action drills if your rifle jammed, right. How to unjam your rifle, preventative maintenance. Clean it after every time you shoot it. Make sure that it's oiled, lubricated. Just drilled it into our heads that this is how you take care of this pretty basic weapon system. I mean, there's not a lot to it. And if you have to spend that amount of time and that amount of energy and effort on a very simple machine like a rifle, why would you be ashamed or why would you feel bad about needing to do a little immediate action or remedial action on the most complicated weapon, which is your brain. I've been there. Trust me. Not only have I been there, but even after I became very public about my struggles, and I like to joke that the worst parts of my life are literally in a congressional record because I testified in front of

the committee about it, but even after that, I've still kind of had to, in some forms, deal with the stigma.

You know, I had somebody, before I went to go work for that member of Congress doing not primarily just veterans' issues, say, "How do you think you're gonna do, not dealing with this one niche issue? Do you think you can kind of handle the pressure," which is a weird way of saying, you know, are you okay enough to really handle the stressors of this job? Things like that. We've gotten a lot better about reducing the stigma. I had a couple of meetings with pretty senior flag officers in the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps. And one of them actually said he was in Fallujah in '05 and went through a lot of stuff. And he said that he was gonna try to get a service dog. And he ultimately did. So the stigma's slowly changing but you're still gonna deal with it. But if you need the help, don't be ashamed. Don't be afraid to get the help you need. You know, whatever you feel about the previous administration, the VA itself had a 90% approval rating on most veterans that used it. The VA in 2014 had broken the veteran community's trust with the wait list scandal but they really kind of went on to correct issues and it's not perfect, but there's resources that are there and use them.

If all else fails, talk to your buddies that, you know, you used to serve with. Guys and girls I served with, you know, I talk to them all the time. Whether they're having issues or not having issues, I just keep in touch with them. I understand why it happens because people want to spread awareness and people want to motivate people to help veterans but it always kind of, not bugged me, but, you know, I saw the 22 pushups a day for the 22 veterans committing suicide a day or 20 or whatever it was. And I'm like, "Hey, instead of doing that, how about we call a veteran a day, 22 days in a row," and actually engage with veterans that you think might be going through some stuff because that will help. By no means am I special in any sort of way, I've been through a lot of mental health challenges and still do, still go through them, but, you know, there are guys and girls out there that go through stuff just as bad or worse than I do. Just engage. Engage with your peers. Engage with the VA and just don't be ashamed. Let's get it done.

Sam: Cole, you mentioned no shame in the mental health game and that got me thinking about all the reasons why my grandfather got Sully, his service dog. One of the main reasons is that he wanted to show veterans that even an ex-President of the United States could ask for help. And I think that's such a powerful example, even though he only had Sully for eight months.

Cole: Why, I like to think on some level I had a little bit to do with that. So when I was at Texas A&M, I was a poli sci major, so I spent a lot of time at the

Bush library. One of my favorite places to hang out was the garden behind the library, with the pond. Etched into the wall was one of his quotes, you know, may future generations understand the burdens and blessings of freedom. May they say we stood where duty required us to stand. And I love that quote for a lot of reasons. You know, one day, I was just out there studying and I saw it was the 75th anniversary of Pearl Harbor. And they had an event with President Bush in attendance. And I went over there just in the off chance that I could say hi to him and shake his hand. Didn't expect to but one of the Secret Service agents on his detail, I noticed had, like, a Marine Corps lapel. So I asked him, I was like, "Oh, hey man, where did you serve," and kind of did the cordial Marine thing. And I was like, "Hey, do you think there's any possibility I could, like, go there and shake his hand?" He was, like, "Yeah, sure," you know. So I went over there and said hi to him. And Kaya wasn't with me at the time but I told him about this service dog issue and things like that. And that was a couple of months before he got Sully so I'd like to think, you know, I mean, maybe it's true, maybe it's not but...

Sam: Well, you get credit. We'll give you credit. They got Sully from American VetDogs and he was great.

Cole: I follow him on Instagram.

Sam: A lot of people do. Yeah, a lot of people do. He's got more than me and my wife combined so we've got some work to do with Sully. But Cole, I'd like to end with this. First, thank you for sharing your time with us today and bringing Kaya in today with you. What impact does the Bush Center have on the Texas A&M campus? Is it a big part of campus life? Is it kind of out on its own island out there? Is it something that students think about?

Cole: So it sits on the West Campus, which is, for those unfamiliar, it is a little disconnected from the main portion of campus where the Memorial Student Center is and the big Flag Room and things like that. But, I'll be honest with you, I enjoyed it because I lived about a mile away from the Bush Center and so, I could walk there for class. Most of my classes were there and even when I didn't have class, you know, I would sit at the pool and kind of enjoy, on a nice day, the serenity of it. At the time, it was actually pretty funny because I was in Afghanistan in 2011. That was when Ambassador Crocker was the ambassador to Afghanistan. And at the time that I was at Texas A&M, he was the dean of The Bush School. So I got to reconnect with him and have lunch with him every now and then. Great guy. All the professors were excellent. They were also there, kind of in the spirit of service. It was a great part of campus.

You know, they have a saying about Texas A&M. From the inside, you can't explain it. From the outside, you can't understand it. And that's part of the reason of what drew me to Texas A&M was because, at the time, Boy Scout being an Eagle Scout and then going into the Marine Corps, which is kind of a funny term. It's kind of a cultish organization, right. I mean, Marines are fanatical about being Marines. And Texas A&M is kind of similar, right. There's a lot of tradition. Obviously, during World War II, it commissioned more military officers than West Point. James Rudder, who was the guy who scaled Pointe du Hoc, is a 34-year-old captain on D-Day, went on to become the president. It's just steeped in tradition. You've been to the Memorial Student Center, all the Medals of Honor that have been awarded to Aggie alumni, it's fitting that a guy who served, and in my estimation was the most accomplished president of the 20th century in so many levels of government service, community service, family, it's fitting this library would be at a place like Texas A&M that is so steeped in tradition, that is so steeped in service to your community and to your fellowmen as Aggies all across the world. And that's kind of one of the things that I tell people is when you see the Texas A&M class ring on somebody, and even if you didn't know that person, have never met that person, didn't go to school with that person, it's, you know, an instant connection. It's like, "Hey, how can I help you?" You know like, "What can I do for you?" And I think the spirit of that was something that was obviously very important to President Bush as well, so I don't know that there's a more fitting quote on the back of that library than the one I've said earlier, because I think that's Aggies, standing where duty requires them. And so that's why I thought it was such a special place and a special experience.

Sam: We've always thought it's been the perfect fit for them, and obviously, they're there forever with their burial plots on campus as well. Well, Cole, thank you for all that you've done. Thank you for your service. Thank you for all you continue to do for our veterans. It was great having you on "All the Best," and hopefully, I can see you and Kaya, in person, soon.

Cole: Yeah, absolutely. Thanks for having me. I appreciate it.

Sam: I'm Sam LeBlond reminding you to listen, share, and subscribe to "All the Best" on Apple podcasts, Spotify and everywhere great podcasts are found. Thank you for joining me as we celebrate All the Best.

Barbara: Both George and I believe that while the White House is important, the country's future is in your house. Every house, all over America.

George: Preparedness, strength, decency, and honor. Courage, sacrifice, the willingness to fight, even die for one's country. America, the land of the free

and the brave. And God bless the United States of America. The greatest country on the face of the Earth.