

To: Cindy Fischer, Office Assistant to Senator Melcher  
Re: 2 Lt Justin Lee Sisson Memorial Highway

January 2015

I've tried to remember a "beginning" point for my memories of Justin Lee...

He is woven into the fabric of my life from before his birth, I think. Justin's mother, Phyllis Mary and I have been lifelong best friends and sisters, if you will, since her birth in Leavenworth, Ks 6 years after me. Our families were already friends way back in the 60's. We were, and still are, family.

Our children were born within 18 months of each other; My Tressa Jo in January and her Ryan in March of '88 and Justin Lee in July of '89. They played at Grandma Judy's house and at Kevin & Phyllis's home when they were little. Our families spent many birthdays together, holidays together, Eagle Scout Achievement, Christmas Eve's, graduations, coming home parties...

Justin grew. He grew physically, emotionally and intellectually. He could/would converse about anything - from a very young age, I might add. He grew into a young man whom we would label these days as, "the total package." Yes, he was quite handsome, but the adjective is "TOTAL." Outside, inside, and most of all what he represented outwardly in his life made him a complete human being. He achieved that label long before his short life ended. He was determined as a youngster to "do" better. He was the kind of friend a friend would like to have - a role model, not just for other young men, but for people, a leader. His spirit and the sparkle in his eyes were contagious. Friend or foe - he was alive and he was here and you **knew** it!

His desire for military service was deep rooted. I believe he was born for it. His family ties to the military have already been identified, but he was born to be a leader. And a leader others would WANT to follow, trusting fully that he would do his best. He would never deliver anything less.

Justin's accomplishments in the short young life he had were many. (He wrestled when he could have been labeled "too small". He played baseball. He was an Eagle Scout. He worked hard and attained the expected results. The people who will speak on his behalf will testify to those and many other accomplishments and achievements. I am not certain that they can aptly describe the ripple effect that Justin's life has had though, as those ripples continue to flow outward into our midst. And I also do not believe those ripples are occurring on this continent alone... Long, long after he is gone, we will remember that he WAS here.

Justin Lee affected every life he touched. We are a small piece of his life's puzzle that will remind each of us daily to be honest, kind, helpful, look out for our neighbor (whoever or wherever we may be), challenge ourselves to try a little harder, dig a little deeper to accomplish that "next goal." His life, and in sorrow - his death, will remind us daily to be vigilant in our prayers and through our actions to be a light of hope for ALL our military sons and daughters. This particular war, this War on Terror, has impacted each and every one of those soldiers who've found themselves in foreign lands, defending the peoples of that place as well as defending OUR freedoms here in the United States we so often take for granted.

2nd Lt. Justin Lee Sissons' home is here. He may not have been born in Kansas, but the majority of his young life was lived here, just 60 some odd miles from here in Johnson County. He is at rest here at the National Cemetery in Lansing. For those who DID NOT know Justin Lee, they might recognize he was an important person, Kansan and American, should they be traveling a small 4 mile stretch of a Kansas highway.

Respectfully,  
Billie Iorger Easterberg