

## SHARRI BRILEY



Sharri is the widow of CWO III Donovan Lee Briley who was KIA in Mogadishu, Somalia on 3 October 1993. Donovan was the co-pilot of Super-61 which was the first Black Hawk helicopter shot down by a rocket-propelled grenade. He and pilot CWO III Cliff Wolcott were killed on impact - the crew members survived the crash. The Academy Award winning film BLACK HAWK DOWN depicts the story of this tragic 18-hour battle where 17 other elite soldiers were also killed in action. The initial mission known as Gothic Serpent started out as a humanitarian effort to stop the threat of famine to the Black Sea Region. Sharri and Donovan were married 2 months shy of 10 years. Their daughter Jordan was only 5 years old at the time of Donovan's death. Jordan is now a beautiful wife to Jacob and an awesome mother to Sharri's handsome grandsons, Isaiah and Elijah.

Sharri is a proud spokesperson for Gold Star Families of Arkansas. She worked closely with the Marine Corps League and the committee members of the Hershel "Woody" Williams Gold Star Families Memorial Monument project. Arkansas was the first state to commit to building a monument on the state capitol grounds. The Marine Corps League has a special place in their hearts for Gold Star Families and saw the need for Arkansans to honor and pay tribute to the sacrifice that these fallen families endure every day. The Gold Star Families Memorial Monument was dedicated on Gold Star Family Day in September 2019.

Sharri became a member of Gold Star Wives of America, Inc in 2006. She served as a chapter president in Little Rock and as a committee chairman on the organization's National Board. She currently serves as the South-Central Region president which encompasses Arkansas, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas.

Sharri is also an honorary member of the Michael Vann Johnson, Jr American Legion Post 74 in North Little Rock.

Sharri is a healthcare analyst for the Division of Medical Services/Office of Finance for the Arkansas Department of Human Services and is continuing her education as a part-time student at the University of Arkansas-Little Rock.

"Our family is approaching the 30-year mark of honoring Donovan, missing Donovan, and sharing Donovan's legacy. My daughter and I are always proud and honored to speak his name, share his stories, and show his face!! I wish I could tell you ALL about Donovan and the hair-raising moments he and his brothers put their poor parents through ... Donovan was a warrior and lived life to the fullest!! It is sometimes very difficult to express how I feel about losing Donovan, but I do know that there are two moments that I will never forget... the moment I met Donovan and what became our last "see ya later" and "take it easy""

Supporting and serving others, especially families of the fallen, has given Sharri a purpose. Having faith through tragedy has inspired her servant's heart. Hearts of our Heroes empowers us to serve one another humbly in love.