

## U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Earns MBA While Deployed—With An Assist From Red Cross



**Daniel Rungo takes a family photo with his wife and daughter after his enlistment ceremony with the U.S. Army.**



**Rungo took exams as early as 4 a.m. to avoid distractions. The American Red Cross Respite Center was the perfect place for him to do so.**



**Rungo marches through the mud during a “spur ride” (a highly strenuous military event designed to test the strength and skill of a soldier).**



**Rungo as a Red Cross volunteer, delivers pizzas to the Respite Center in Powidz.**

(NAPS)—A lot was racing through Staff Sergeant Daniel Rungo’s mind when he learned he’d be deploying to Poland. The forward operating site his unit would be living on was primitive. They’d be co-dwelling in tents. And he’d be away from his wife and baby daughter for at least 90 days. But where most see challenges, Rungo saw a “time management opportunity.”

“I decided to go to college,” he shared.

Education has always been important to Rungo, who cited free school and consistent, full-time work as his motivations when he enlisted in the military several years ago. Since joining, he has completed a bachelor’s degree and several other credited courses, stating it’s easy to find the time when you live where you work. However, when he arrived at Forward Operating Site (FOS) Powidz, studying and taking proctored tests was nearly impossible in a crowded 12-person tent.

“And if anyone walked in the room, your test was over,” he shared. “And the Wi-Fi didn’t work. I couldn’t even take a test on it.”

That changed when he discovered the American Red Cross Respite Center on base. The center provided him with reliable internet and a quiet space to study.

“The space provided mattered to me more than everyone else,” he explained. “I went in there at 4 in the morning on my test days and just stayed in there and opened it up after that.”

By his spending so much time in the center, others began to recognize his presence and what started as a solitary thing became something more meaningful. It became his community.

“I made some friends,” he said, “and those people, they have advice, and

they have tips and tricks, and they have something to teach you.”

In addition to completing his M.B.A., Rungo started volunteering with the American Red Cross, accumulating over 1,000 volunteer hours while at FOS Powidz.

“[My] last month there, I think I just left my laptop,” he laughed. “It sucks that I was away from my family. We all hated it, and we complained like everybody else, but I got something done that no longer took time away from the family. I think that’s a win.”

Now that Rungo has earned his degree, he’s set his sights on becoming an FBI special agent. He also plans to continue volunteering with the Red Cross in Texas.

“My original plan 10 years ago was that I was going to retire after 20 years in the military,” shared Rungo. “I’ve put some second thought after all this education, and I’m hoping I can put it to use.”

For nearly 140 years, the Red Cross has supported every major forward deployment and mobilization of the U.S. military. This support is provided by a global network of Red Cross employees and volunteers, ranging from deployment zones to military hospitals, and is scaled to meet the evolving needs of service members and military-connected families. Red Cross teams relay emergency communication messages during crises, provide respite activities, deliver care packages, and work alongside command leadership to ensure adequate care is present as humanitarian needs arise.

To learn more about how the American Red Cross supports members of the U.S. military, visit [redcross.org/saf](http://redcross.org/saf).