

## Alumnus makes film about Iraq war

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mtravis@tulane.edu

Justin Springer, a 2003 Tulane University graduate, over and over again witnessed from up close on the frontline soldiers sustaining the “signature wound” of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. And when he returned home, he made a film about it.



Justin Springer narrates *Along Recovery*, a documentary he made about American soldiers with traumatic brain injury. Springer is an Iraq war veteran and a Tulane ROTC graduate. (Photo from Justin Springer)

Commissioned as a second lieutenant through the Tulane Army ROTC program, Springer served in the U.S. Army for two tours of duty in Iraq as a battalion communications officer with the Army's 1st Brigade/1st Infantry Division.

The mission of his battalion was route-clearance operations ? “basically clearing and looking for mines.”

Dozens of soldiers in Springer's battalion sustained traumatic brain injuries (TBI) as a result of exposure to roadside bomb blasts.

After he left active duty in 2009, Springer decided to find out what happened to four soldiers suffering from TBI. For nearly two years, Springer filmed the soldiers' treatment at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio and moments from their

everyday lives as they struggled to get back to “normal.”

TBI is a complex injury that doctors do not fully understand. Symptoms are headaches, chronic pain, impaired memory and concentration, and behavioral distress. It is estimated that nearly 20 percent of combat troops are affected by TBI and posttraumatic stress disorder.

[Along Recovery](#), a documentary produced, directed, filmed and mostly edited by Springer, presents the “unbiased reality of what these guys go through.”

“I feel that this is something the public should know about and should understand in an intelligent manner, without it being embellished and dramatized,” says Springer.

Springer majored in film studies and communication. His current job is as a producer and director for a production company in Denver.

In time for Veterans Day, [Gravitas Ventures](#), an independent film distributor, is releasing *Along Recovery* through online platforms such as Netflix, iTunes and Amazon Prime.