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## Army doctor stays positive after seeing horrors of war

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**By Maura Possley, Staff Writer**

He was alongside U.S. forces in Najaf, Iraq, as they fought the Al-Sadr militia.

He was there as troops seized the Iraqi city of Fallujah.

In his 15 months as an Army doctor in Iraq - one of the longest deployments of a military physician since World War II - Dr. Sudip Bose saw the worst humanity can offer.

His tour treating thousands of servicemen and women fighting in the war was spent on those front lines or at the scene of a raid or injury as part of what's called the Quick Reaction Force in the 1st Calvary Division.

He's also treated one of the most notorious men to walk the earth - Saddam Hussein, the former president of Iraq convicted and hanged and one reason the United States invaded the country.

Today, four years after Bose returned from duty, he serves on a different sort of front line in the emergency room at Christ Medical Center in Oak Lawn as its attending emergency physician.

"The injuries are many times uncontrollable - being at the wrong place, wrong time," Bose said, recalling treating the aftermath of roadside bombs and improvised explosive devices.

A native of Naperville, Bose joined the Army while at Northwestern University in 1995. He began his career as a resident physician at the Darnall Army Medical Center in Fort Hood, Texas.

"You see and experience horrific things, but at the same time you see incredible acts of courage and humanity - soldiers risking their lives for a fellow comrade, working together with locals to build schools and conduct clinics," Bose said of his service.

"For me, it was rewarding to be out there to help our soldiers and injured locals. This is what kept all of us going - that despite the chaos and horrors of war, humanity can still rise above."

Bose is as humble in his experiences as he is dedicated to the patients in his care.

So much so that even for a man despised by Americans and some Iraqis - Hussein - he wouldn't divulge details of his care, citing his patient-doctor relationship.

"When things happen like that, you just focus on your mission and you don't really have time to feel," Bose said. "You just don't think about your emotions at that point, you just act."

In Iraq, Bose became a sounding board for soldiers in his care, he said. Through those conversations emerged his new mission in the Southland.

When he's not reacting to trauma in Christ's emergency room, Bose is out speaking here and across the country in hospitals, schools and churches about a rising need for awareness on post-traumatic stress disorder.

"Even if you come back 'uninjured', you can have mental abrasions that can be worse - these are the things that go unrecognized," the doctor said. "It's tough to reintegrate into a modern world after being in a zone where you're just concerned about surviving; soldiers sometimes feel detached, indifferent and even frustrated with 'problems' we have here."

As advances in medicine have brought more soldiers back from war alive, more will suffer from emotional scarring that just as urgently needs treating, Bose said.

"It's important for us to understand what they've been through so that we can make re-integration easier," he said. "There are hundreds and thousands of soldiers coming back, and at some point each of us will interact with one."

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