

January 31, 2012 [Link](#)

We cover many soldier homecomings and each one is special and unique. But, the story of a soldier who returned home this weekend has a twist. First Lieutenant David Meek was a principal, married with three children, but he never felt fulfilled until he joined the military.

Meek returned home on leave Saturday night. He cried while hugging his family for the first time in five months.

Friends and family met him with cheers. Meek, humbled, but welcomed them after serving his country, something he's always wanted, but waited to do.

"I don't know how people do it without family, you know," said Meek.

Meek's family has supported him through an uncommon life path. His kids grew up knowing their dad as the Bakersfield Christian High School principal. But, on May 23, 2008, after he handed his oldest daughter, Jessica, her diploma, he resigned as principal and reported to basic training.

41-year old Meek says he spent a lifetime wanting to enlist and his wife of 20 years understood.

"I'm always really supportive," said Cindy Meek. "He has a lot of dreams and aspirations, and I'm just the support and so things don't usually bother me."

Meek has been in Afghanistan serving next to soldiers half his age. It's in those moments that being a principal, a father with life experience, helped.

"They are like my kids, and so, I try to take care of them as if it were my son or daughter," Meek said, fighting back tears.

As he supported his troops, back in Bakersfield, the support of his family never stopped. To show his appreciation, Meek presented his wife with a special military coin, thanking her for the price she's paid to allow his dream to come true. He told the crowd what it meant.

"You guys know that receiving a coin is like a big thing. So, I found a coin and you know it really said a lot. And, I wanted people to be around when I gave it to you. And, it says 'military spouse; toughest job in the military,' and I got that for my wife."

First Lieutenant Meek has two weeks of leave. When he reports back to service, he will be promoted to Captain and have another five months of duty.