Sister Soldiers' Hair-Raising War Stories

December 10, 2010

When it comes to war, hair care may be anon-issue for many. But for black female soldiers, hair concerns whileon military duty only add to their daily struggles. Enter the SisterSoldier Project, a relief effort started in 2006 by Myraline MorrisWhitaker.

Whitaker, a California businesswoman, learned that themilitary requires women to wear their hair sleeked back and "tuckedin." Without the proper training (and a special-issue ration of ethnichair products) black women's hair texture makes this mission all butimpossible. "The military expects a certain look, and [black women]just can't comply," Whitaker said. "Without the proper products, theirhair cannot be pulled back into a ponytail, not even close."

ThenWhitaker's inner entrepreneur kicked in. To help these women meet theirbasic hair care needs while stationed overseas, she brought in thereserves. Whitaker began sending small health, hygiene and hair productpackages to her sister soldiers.

Soon Whitaker's relief effortmushroomed. The small project boomed into a full-time organization.Whitaker sensed there were many more people who might want to help butdidn't know how. As a result, she created the Sister Soldiers website.Now there was a way for others to get involved. (What better way tosupport these sister soldiers than send them products from those whocould relate?)

Here's how it works: Whitaker's websitecollects information from African-American female soldiers about theproducts they need. Then Sister Soldiers posts these needed products ontheir website, from shampoos and conditioners to root stimulators andrelaxers. Visitors to the website can pick a package or packages they'dlike to sponsor then either identify a specific soldier to ship it toor let Sister Soldier ship to a soldier who has made a request. In ajust a few days sister soldiers in a foreign land can get a health andhygiene care package from home to help them meet hairdo regulations,and you've shown your gratitude for their time and sacrifice.

Check out SisterSoldier.com to view pictures of packing parties, read thank you notes from soldiers stationed oversees, or make a donation to the cause.

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http://beta.docker.tusaludmag.com/article/Sister-Soldier-TS-19545-3794