

SPECIAL RECOGNITION CATEGORY - VOCAL MUSIC DIVISION

The Ballad of Ira Hayes

STEVE MCGINNIS

VA CENTRAL IOWA HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

KNOXVILLE, IOWA

Steve McGinnis is a 37-year-old Army veteran of the Gulf War. He chose to enter the song, *Ballad of Ira Hayes* into the creative arts competition as a dedication to fellow veterans and to draw attention to the sacrifices made by Ira Hayes, the first Native American to serve in war.

Entering this song was a therapeutic process for McGinnis. The challenges of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety disorder have been a part of his life for several years. Nevertheless, he felt strongly about presenting this particular song at the VA medical facility in Knoxville, saying, “Once I stopped shaking when the song was over, I felt pretty good about the performance!”

By accomplishing the goal of preparing and performing a song that is dear to his heart, Steve McGinnis has developed an increase in his self-esteem. That success is motivating him to face other life challenges in the future.