

## **Skier Profile**

### **Steven Dassler – First Time Skier Takes to the Slopes**

When Steven Dassler was younger, he and a neighborhood friend would always go to a mountain area around their homes in Palmdale, Calif., to play soldiers. Since he is only 19 now, those days really weren't all that long ago. Little did he know that 10 years down the road he would be a soldier himself.

"Joining the service was always something that I've wanted to do," Dassler, said. "Ever since I was younger it was always on my mind."

Dassler joined the Army in the field artillery in 2004, and was eventually deployed to Iraq. On July 19, 2005, a roadside bomb went off where he was stationed in southeast Baghdad, injuring him enough to require a below-the-knee amputation of his right leg.

Although Dassler had a long road to recovery ahead of him after his injury, his occupational therapist told him about the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic and encouraged him to go. "I had never gone skiing or snowboarding before my accident and I was never really into school sports, so I am really excited about going to the Clinic in April," Dassler said.

Steven Dassler's advice to other newly injured veterans is simple: "You have to keep a positive and upbeat attitude," he said. Sticking to his own advice; he tried snowboarding for the first time after he registered for the Clinic. He is ready to do it again in Snowmass this April.