Instructor fulfills duty in Iraq

By Josh Flint

While many students prepare to enjoy a turkey dinner with their families, one man can only wish he was in the comfort of his own home this holiday season.

Capt. Benedict J. Smith, a 10-year veteran of the military service, said he fears for his life during the upcoming holiday season.

He and several other U.S. soldiers were killed Nov. 7 when his helicopter crashed in Iraq.

Benedict was killed midway through his third deployment, said Juanita, a part of an Army Reserve Engineer Battalion.

The military science department at Truman is made up of commissioned officers and noncommissioned officers. A commissioned officer acts as a military service after graduating from a four-year university, while the noncommissioned officer is a participant who had risked his life.

His family members remember his life outside of work as what he loved most. He loved making his wife happy and playing the X-Box,” Leo said.

But Benedict knew the potential consequences of his career, Margie said. “If he did go, he never said one negative thing about it,” Leo said.

“He's sacrificing a normal life essentially for the war on terrorism,” Beach said.

The trip back to the airport through Baghdad was vital to return in a safe way. Beach said the trip was canceled because neither another improvised explosive device was found on the road.

“Thank you, Lord, I was in the land vehicle,” Beach said.

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