



## Video conference reuniting family over satellites

### Link brings soldier face to face with loved ones

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Months have passed since Jennifer Norrid and her daughter, Kaleigh, spoke to their husband and father, Staff Sgt. Clifton Norrid, who is serving in Iraq.

On Saturday, the three were to be brought back together as Freedom Calls Foundation made it possible for the family to see and speak to the soldier as he is promoted from staff sergeant to sergeant 1st class in the Army.

The Norrid family could not wait to reunite via video conference at Alvarado High School. Alvarado ISD worked with the Freedom Calls Foundation, who built the satellite network connecting military camps on the front lines in Iraq to the United States, for the call.

“We would like to thank the Freedom Calls Foundation for making this connection possible,” Alvarado ISD instructional technology coordinator Julie Holland said. “This is a great service. We appreciate how important it is for military families to stay connected and especially in wartime.

“We are delighted to make these arrangements and hope the video conference enables the Norrids to share time together in a meaningful way while Clifton is away from home serving his country.”

The Norrids were to attend their conference over the satellite network that Freedom Calls has built in cooperation with the Army and Marines to serve deployed military personnel and their families 24 hours per day free of charge.

John Harlow, executive director of the Freedom Calls Foundation, said keeping families in touch is an important aspect of war.

“The foundation is transforming a long standing family communication paradigm in time of war by enabling soldiers to save \$400,000 a month over the commercially exploitative rates charged by contractors in Iraq,” Harlow said. “Soldiers are now in position to keep their commitments to their families at the same time they keep their commitment to their country.

Alvarado ISD is being helped by the Region 11 Education Service Center in Fort Worth. Gerri Maglia, Carla Crocker and Patrick Crawford are the ones making everything happen on the technical side.

Alvarado Superintendent Dr. Chester Juroska said the video conference is another example of how the district is a leader in technology.

“I am so proud that AISD has the capabilities to provide this service,” he said. “We are surely leaders in educational technology.”