

The Moline Dispatch

Video link lets dad in Iraq admire newborn

By [Amy Rausch](#), staff writer

SILVIS -- The smile never left the young Marine's face as he looked at his computer screen in Iraq and saw the face of his baby girl, just 18 hours old.

'I have something for you,' his wife said, holding up their daughter to the Web camera.

'Wow,' he said. 'She's beautiful,' and later asked, 'Can you hold her closer to the screen?'

Cpl. Angel Mojica's wife Ashley gave birth to Maddisyn Ann at 4:56 p.m. Thursday at Genesis Medical Center's Illini Campus.



Gary Krambeck

Ashley Mojica holds up her new born daughter Maddisyn Ann born at 4:56 p.m. Thursday at Genesis Medical Center's Illini Campus, for her husband Corporal Angel Mojica to see on a video conference call while he is stationed Iraq. The 90 - minute conference call held Friday afternoon at the Genesis Medical Center's Illini campus was made possible with the help of the Freedom Calls Foundation

It will be another three months before he can meet his baby in person, but with the help of the [Freedom Calls Foundation](#) he and Mrs. Mojica were able to have a video conference call Friday.

Before the call, Mrs. Mojica said she was 'very, very, very excited' to see and talk to her husband, who was deployed in April. Freedom Calls arranged the 90-minute phone call.

Mrs. Mojica said it had been a long time since she'd been able to speak to her husband that long. 'He just found out at 3:30 this morning that she was born.'

She showed the proud Dad the baby's full head of hair and tried to get the baby to open her eyes so he could see that they are blue. Later, she took off one of Maddisyn's socks so he could 'see her little feet.

'Look Dad, see how little she is?' Mrs. Mojica asked. 'She looks like you, huh?'

Originally from Davenport, Mrs. Mojica returned to the Quad-Cities from Oceanside, Calif., where Cpl. Mojica is stationed at Camp Pendleton.

She left California after her husband was deployed because she wanted to spend the rest of her pregnancy, and give birth, near her family. She will return to California in October to get the couple's apartment ready for when her husband comes home in November.

The couple, who met on a blind date at the Marine's Ball in Las Vegas two years ago, will celebrate their first anniversary at the end of this month.

Mrs. Mojica learned she was pregnant last November, and when she learned her due date, the couple quickly realized Cpl. Mojica would be deployed when the baby was born.

'It was pretty devastating realizing it,' she said, but 'she'll still be little when he gets here.'

They picked out the name soon after they got married. 'We both wanted a girl and we got it - first try,' Mrs. Mojica said.

Cpl. Mojica, an Amtrak driver, hasn't been able to tell his wife much about what he's doing in Iraq. When she asked how he is doing, he replied 'all right,' adding that 'I'm really happy now.'

He said it's 130 degrees 'in the shade' there now.

Wiping tears from his eyes, he said he was 'just real happy' to see his wife and Maddisyn, and told his wife to 'take lots of pictures.'

Mrs. Mojica's doctor, Dr. Anita Pinc, stopped by to 'meet' Cpl. Mojica. 'Ashley did fantastic,' she said of the nine-hour labor. 'She's a trooper. You would be very proud of Ashley.'

Mrs. Mojica's grandmother, Shirley Mockmore of Rock Island, said her granddaughter worked hard to set up the phone call after learning her husband wouldn't be home for the baby's birth.

The phone call was difficult to coordinate because of Cpl. Mojica's busy schedule. 'She did all her homework on it,' Ms. Mockmore said. 'She got everything rolling.'

Dr. Pinc said she and Mrs. Mojica arranged Thursday as the date to induce labor because they thought Cpl. Mojica would be able to come home then. Although that didn't work out, the video conference was the next best thing.

'This was great they could have the opportunity to be able to see each other,' she said.

It has been difficult for Mrs. Mojica to be pregnant with her husband deployed, Mrs. Mockmore said.

'She's shed a lot of tears and I'm sure he did too. This really helps. She's so happy he could see the baby. We just can't wait to get him back here.'