

Marine witnesses birth of his daughter via video

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Sgt. Chad Mortenson was able to kiss his newborn, despite being thousands of miles away.

The Mustang Marine, who is serving at Iraq's Al-Asad Air Base with the Tinker Air Force Base Fox Battery Marine Reserve Unit, witnessed the birth of 6-pound, 13-ounce daughter Jayden Faith Mortenson via videoconference at 8:11 a.m. Wednesday.

Mortenson was practically next to the blond-haired infant, if such a thing can be said of someone stationed half a world away. He watched the C-section delivery and offered words of love and encouragement to his wife. He was able to take pictures to show to his buddies.



Denae Mortenson holds her baby Jayden. Photo provided by INTEGRIS Health



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Denae Mortenson said she would have preferred to have been with her husband but, under the circumstances, the videoconference was the next best thing.

Jayden is the couple's first child. The couple have been married since September 2005. Mortenson is scheduled to return in February.

Freedom Calls Foundation connected the 25-year-old Marine and his wife, Denae, who is recuperating at Integris Southwest Medical Center in Oklahoma City.

New Jersey-based Freedom Calls helps troops stationed overseas keep in touch with their families. The "press" section of its Web site reads like a birth announcement in the newspaper — "Soldier dad sees son for first time via video" and "Long distance delivery," two headlines announce.

Mortenson was deployed June 26.

Jayden was the third Oklahoma baby this week whose birth was transmitted by video.