

Soldier meets boy after life-saving bone marrow transplant

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DALLAS - In terms of giving, most would think serving a year in Iraq would be enough, but not for one Texas soldier. When Christopher Saucedo returned home from his tour in Baghdad, he decided to fight one more battle.

Two years ago, Saucedo, 27, learned he was a near perfect match for a 12-year-old boy dying from a bone marrow disease called aplastic anemia. Once again, Saucedo gave to save a life.

"It makes it different knowing it's something I wanted to, and not something I was trained to do," Saucedo said.

His life-saving gift was something the mother of the sick boy, 47-year-old Raquel Garay, wasn't going to let go underappreciated.

"Thank you," she said. "You are my hero. Thank you. My son is alive."

Now 14-years-old, Richard Garay, of Grand Prairie, met with the two-time hero Monday in the lobby of Bright Building at Children's Medical Center of Dallas.

When it came to Richard's chances of finding a match, doctors said it was somewhat of a challenge since race does make a difference when it comes to bone marrow. Being Hispanic, finding Saucedo was a gift for Richard since doctors say minority donors are seriously scarce.

"They said I had a couple of weeks to live," he said. "And now that he donated his bone marrow, now I have many years to come."

For him, the war is over. The bone marrow transplant was a complete cure.

"He's like an angel with no wings," Mrs. Garay said of Saucedo.

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