



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF NAVAL RECORDS  
2 NAVY ANNEX  
WASHINGTON DC 20370-5100

JRE  
Docket No: 4334-01  
12 February 2002

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

This is in reference to your application for correction of your naval record pursuant to the provisions of title 10 of the United States Code, section 1552.

A three-member panel of the Board for Correction of Naval Records, sitting in executive session, considered your application on 7 February 2002. Your allegations of error and injustice were reviewed in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures applicable to the proceedings of this Board. Documentary material considered by the Board consisted of your application, together with all material submitted in support thereof, your naval record and applicable statutes, regulations and policies.

After careful and conscientious consideration of the entire record, the Board found that the evidence submitted was insufficient to establish the existence of probable material error or injustice.

The Board found that you underwent a pre-enlistment physical examination on 5 December 1997. You completed a Report of Medical History on that date in which you denied having a history of depression, excessive worry, nervous trouble of any sort, or alcohol abuse. You enlisted in the Navy on 23 December 1997. On 13 January 1999, you reported that you had problems with mood swings since grade school, and that you had suicidal ideation, but no plan. During February 1999, you reported extreme distress, homicidal and suicidal thoughts, and an inability to tolerate your work environment. You disclosed a long history of depressed mood, and indicated that you had received counseling briefly at age 16, but had never been psychiatrically hospitalized, or been on psychiatric medication. You also disclosed a history of alcohol abuse, and stated that you began drinking at age 13, and were drinking daily by age 16. You were evaluated by a medical board on 14 April 2000, and given diagnoses of post traumatic stress disorder, existed prior to service (EPTS), aggravated by service; alcohol dependence; major depression, did not EPTS, and internal derangement of the left knee, with possible meniscus tear. The medical board determined that the post traumatic stress disorder was worsened by your active duty service, particularly by the close

quarters and harsh environments of shipboard life, which reminded you of the childhood abuse committed against you by your stepfather. The medical board also concluded that the depressive disorder, by itself, would not have precluded further service. On 29 June 2000, the Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) made preliminary findings that you were unfit for duty because of post traumatic stress disorder and major depression, which existed prior to your enlistment, and were not aggravated by your service. The knee condition was not considered unfitting, and the alcohol dependence was classified as a condition which did not constitute a physical disability. It appears that the PEB did not accept the medical board's determination that your exposure to close quarters and harsh environments on board ship resulted in or amounted to service aggravation of your condition. You accepted those findings on 11 July 2000, and you were discharged by reason of physical disability on 15 August 2000, without entitlement to disability benefits administered by the Department of the Navy.

The Board was not persuaded that you were unfit for duty because of a disability which was incurred in or aggravated by your naval service. It appears that you suffered from long standing mental disorders which you failed to disclose when you applied for enlistment, and would have precluded your enlistment had you disclosed them. Although the conditions became worse following your entry on active duty and assignment to a ship, you have not demonstrated that there was an increase in the severity of the conditions beyond natural progression. Accordingly, your application has been denied. The names and votes of the members of the panel will be furnished upon request.

It is regretted that the circumstances of your case are such that favorable action cannot be taken. You are entitled to have the Board reconsider its decision upon submission of new and material evidence or other matter not previously considered by the Board. In this regard, it is important to keep in mind that a presumption of regularity attaches to all official records. Consequently, when applying for a correction of an official naval record, the burden is on the applicant to demonstrate the existence of probable material error or injustice.

Sincerely,

W. DEAN PFEIFFER  
Executive Director