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Vice President Joe Biden and Dr. Jill Biden take photos with guests at a USO Reception, in the library of the Naval Observatory Residence in Washington, D.C., Oct. 19, 2015. (Official White House Photo by Chuck Kennedy)

WASHINGTON, D.C. (WKBN) – A Jackson- Milton High School graduate was named Marine of the Year during a military gala in Washington, D.C.

Staff Sgt. Joseph Bednarik was name Marine of the Year on Oct. 20 during at a gala in the nation’s Capitol honoring top U.S. military men and women.

Bednarik graduated from Jackson-Milton High school in 2003 and began his military career shortly thereafter. He served two tours of duty in Afghanistan and one tour in Iraq.

During his service, Bednarik was hit by an improvised explosive device (IED) and was shot in the leg. He also suffered injuries to his ear and sustained a broken collar bone.

Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Robert Neller said he was familiar with the dangerous location in which Bednarik served.

“I’ve been there, I know exactly where he was,” Neller said, noting Bednarik’s courage in treating a fellow Marine after attack. The young Marine overcame his own injuries to go on and serve three more deployments, the general said.

Bednarik said he was humbled by the honor and was quick to say his fellow Marines are also worthy of the same praise.

“There are a lot of Marines out there doing just as good stuff as I am if not better. I got lucky enough to have a great chain of command that recognized my contributions,” Bednarik said.

Bednarik has served 12 years in the Marine Corps and recently re-enlisted. He also volunteers outside of his military duties by coaching youth sports and serves as a pack parent for his daughter’s Girl Scout troop.

Bednarik is currently stationed in San Diego, California.