Paul M. & P. Russell Marek Bios.

**Paul M. Marek is a Past President of the Palm Beach & Brevard County chapters of the Mortgage Bankers of America. After 45 years in the Mortgage Lending business, 30 of which he owned his own lending business in Brevard County, had to take early retirement to become a VA Certified caregiver, along with his wife Rose, in order to attend to their 100% disabled veteran son Russell. Paul stayed active in Mortgage lending as a certified State instructor for the Florida Mortgage Professionals and the Florida Realtors, authoring & teaching 12 Continuing Education courses in Mortgage Finance. His Wife of nearly 50 years passed away unexpectedly in 2017 and Paul had to sell the family home of 30 years to take full time residence with Russell, in his specially adapted home to provide 24/7 care for his 100% Disabled son.**

**U S Army SSG. P. Russell Marek (ret)**

**SSG. P. Russell Marek, US Army (ret) with a 100% Disability rating, enlisted in the Army in February, 1997 doing his basic training at Ft. Knox, Ky. to become a “Tanker”. His first duty station was Rays Barracks in Freidburg Germany, where he was assigned to the 137th armor group. Near the end of his Germany tour he was assigned to the NATO K-FOR group serving almost nine months in Kosovo.**

**In 2003 Russ served as an M1A1 Tank Gunner during the initial invasion of Iraq and engaged 14 enemy tanks, winning every battle. Russ earned his Bronze Star and Combat action badge during his first tour. After spending a year Stateside at Ft. Stewart Ga. Russ returned to Iraq in January 2005 and while on a mission to intercept arms and munitions coming in from Iran, an IED destroyed his M1A1 tank.**

**In this massive explosion Russ lost his dominant limbs (Rt. Arm & Leg), Sustained a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), suffered 3rd degree burns on 20% of his body and lost his right ear and left thumb. Company “C”, 4th Battalion, 64th Regiment of the 3rd ID lost 3 soldiers, 2 Battle Tanks and four soldiers were severely injured during that mission.**

**SSG. Marek healed from his 32nd major surgery, and in June 2014 was able to use his new prosthetic leg to start walking AGAIN after being wheelchair bound for over 7 months.**

**Russell was elected Commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Chapter 453, Merritt Island, Fl. and was the ”Host Commander to the State MOPH Convention in June 2014. Russ travels across Florida with his dad telling his story to Civilian & Veteran Amputees to show what can be accomplished, “AFTER ACTION”. Russ lives in Viera, Fl. In his Specially Adapted Home and works diligently every day to regain his independence once again.**