

For Immediate Release

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Assurant Employee Benefits honors Minnesota man for his perseverance after disabling injury

Kansas City, Mo., (August 26, 2009) – Kansas City-based Assurant Employee Benefits today announces it is honoring disability claimant Jerry Obieglo with its Perseverance Award for his efforts to overcome the effects of a serious injury and return to work in a physically demanding job.

Obieglo was serving in his elected position as post commander of the local VFW hall in Winona, Minn., when intervening in a fight left his tibia shattered and prospects of ever returning to work as a training/program officer at the Winona County Jail impossible.

“My job required the ability to lift, and also to run and kneel,” Obieglo said. “Shattering my tibia left me unable to do any of that, as I couldn’t put any weight on that leg.”

Obieglo underwent surgery and many weeks of rehabilitation, determined to return to his own job, even though his surgeon had told him he was finished doing the work he loved.

“I found a copy of my job description at home and focused my rehab efforts on what I knew I needed to be able to do to go back to work,” Obieglo said.

His efforts paid off. Seventeen weeks after his injury, his surgeon signed off, allowing him to return to work in his own job, where he performs all required duties, including kneeling for cell searches and instructing others in self defense.

“If Mr. Obieglo had not been so active in his recovery and advocating for himself, I don’t think his return to work in his own job would have been an option,” said Rob Rasmussen, the vocational specialist at Assurant Employee Benefits who nominated Obieglo for recognition. “The fact that he made a successful return to work just four months after such a severe injury is testimony to his drive, perseverance and proactive attitude toward recovery.”

Assurant Employee Benefits’ Perseverance Award recognizes no more than 12 people annually for demonstrating proactivity, resilience, will power and conscientiousness in their recovery from a disabling illness or injury.

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