

Mathew B. Tully Awarded Purple Heart by President Obama

New York National Guard Lieutenant Colonel, and Tully Rinckey PLLC founding partner, Mathew B. Tully has been awarded the Purple Heart by President Barack Obama after suffering injuries he sustained in a suicide bombing while serving in Afghanistan.

Tully, who stepped down from his chief executive role at the firm earlier this year to carry out his military duties, is currently recovering from his injuries and is expected to return to his leadership role in the spring of 2013.

It was on Aug. 7 when he sustained his injuries after a suicide bomber, using a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) “attempted to kill him and others from his unit,” according to a press release. “Fortunately, no U.S. service members were killed in this attack near the village of Pul-I-Alam in Logar Province, Afghanistan.”

Last May, he received the Combat Action Badge when hostile forces, armed with AK-47 rifles and rocket-propelled grenades, attacked him. He was not injured in that earlier attack.

“Mat has made many sacrifices in his long service to our country, and I’m proud to run a business with him. We are hoping for his speedy recovery as I’m sure he’s eager to get back to fighting beside our troops in the field,” said Managing Partner Greg T. Rinckey, who is himself an Army veteran having served for six years with the Judge Advocate General’s (JAG) Corps.

“Although Tully works as an attorney at his full-service law firm in Albany, he does not serve as a JAG attorney in the Army. Instead, he serves as a combat arms officer,” the press release said. His military career dates back to 1991, when he joined Hofstra University’s ROTC program and met Mr. Rinckey. His firm, Tully Rinckey PLLC is a Service-Disabled, Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOB) and was founded following Tully’s escape from the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001.

The Purple Heart is the U.S. military’s oldest decoration still being awarded. A U.S. military decoration awarded to those who have been wounded or killed while serving the U.S. military, it was established by General George Washington at Newburgh, N.Y. on Aug. 7, 1782.

Between Dec. 5, 2001 and June 30, 2012, 7,272 service members involved in the war in Afghanistan – Operation Enduring Freedom – have been awarded the Purple Heart, according to the U.S. Army Human Resources Command.

Since founding Tully Rinckey PLLC in 2003, Tully has temporarily left his growing company for deployments in Iraq, Egypt, and Afghanistan. He is currently on a military leave of absence from the law firm, as provided for by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). This federal law protects the civilian employment of military members and Tully has pioneered the litigation of military service members’ rights. Most notably, in 2007 he helped then-Sen. Barack Obama make improvements to the Act that ultimately were

signed into law by President George W. Bush.