

TIP OF THE SPEAR

**MARSOC Marines return
from Afghan deployment**



Ranger receives the Distinguished Service Cross ... 16
MARSOC Marine awarded the Navy Cross ... 26



U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

MARSOC Marines return from Afghan deployment ... 30



Tip of the Spear



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(Cover) Marines with U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, provide security during a two-day presence patrol with Afghan Commandos in Farah province Feb. 27. Marines with MARSOC's 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion recently returned from a nine-month deployment to Afghanistan, where they commanded the Special Operations Task Force - West and oversaw one of Afghanistan's bloodiest regions. Photo by Marine Corps Cpl. Kyle McNally.

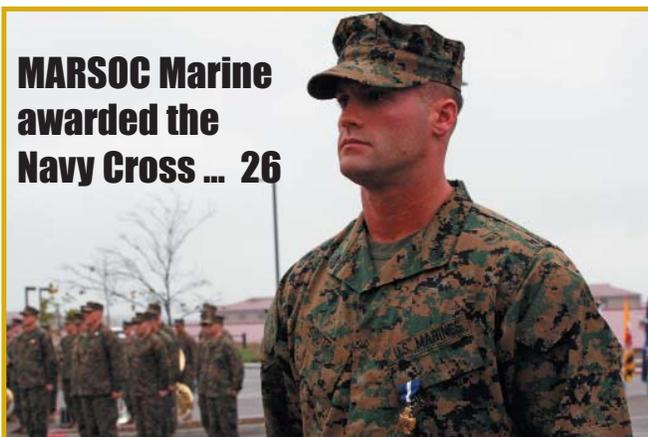
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U.S. Army Special Operations Command



USSOCCOM Images of 2012



Candidates work together to break down a make shift vehicle during the Team Week phase of the Army Special Forces Assessment and Selection course, Jan. 22, in the woods of North Carolina near Camp Mackall. Team Week is designed to evaluate the candidate's behaviors to determine their potential to be a member of the Special Forces Regiment. Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Marcus Butler.



United States Army Special Operations Soldiers participate in a capabilities exercise, April 26. USASOC courtesy photo.



A Special Forces Master Mountaineering Course instructor climbs an icy cliff using picks and crampons in order to demonstrate proper techniques for his students below, during a training exercise Feb. 22 at Rocky Mountain National Park in Estes Park, Colo. Photo by David Chace.



USSOCCOM Images of 2012

Naval Special Operations Command



USSOCOM Images of 2012



Light-weight tactical all terrain vehicle students get hands-on experience driving the vehicles in various environments and situations to prepare them for operations overseas. The LTATV is a Special Operations Command-funded program that provides SEALs with a new combat capability. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Megan Anuci.



A Rigid-Hulled Inflatable Boat performs an assault in Tampa, Fla., May 23, during International Special Operations Forces week. Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Larry W. Carpenter Jr.



A squad of U.S. Navy SEALs participate in ground mobility training with Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Armored Vehicles March 28. The MRAP is used for combat patrols and high-risk missions. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Meranda Keller.



The ship's officers and crew man the ship during the commissioning ceremony of the Arleigh-Burke class destroyer USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112), in New York City, Oct. 6. Murphy is named after Lt. Michael Murphy, a Navy SEAL and Medal of Honor recipient who posthumously received the nation's highest military honor for bravery during combat in Afghanistan in 2005. Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Peter D. Lawlor.



USSOCOM Images of 2012

Air Force Special Operations Command



USSOCOM Images of 2012



A 71st Special Operations Squadron, CV-22 Osprey, is refueled by a 522nd Special Operations Squadron MC-130J Combat Shadow II in the skies of New Mexico, Jan. 4. The 71st is stationed at Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M., and the 522nd SOS at Cannon Air Force Base, N.M. Photo by Senior Airman James Bell.



A U.S. Air Force pararescueman provides rear cover for an extraction team during an exercise on Eglin Range, Fla., Aug. 21. The pararescueman was participating in a scenario where his team had to respond to a simulated improvised explosive device explosion and transport the injured to safety. Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. John Bainter.



U.S. Air Force Special Operations Weather Teams (SOWT) participate in a training scenario on a CH-47 Chinook during Emerald Warrior, Hurlburt Field, Fla., March 7. The primary purpose of Emerald Warrior is to exercise Special Operations components in urban and irregular warfare settings to support combatant commanders in theater campaigns. Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Clay Lancaster.



USSOCCOM Images of 2012

Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command



USSOCOM Images of 2012



Marines with 3rd Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, practice helocasting drills in Savannah, Ga., May 23. Photo by Marine Corps Sgt. Anthony Carter.



Marines with 3rd Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, conduct predeployment training in South Carolina, May 22 - 24. Photo by Marine Corps Sgt. Anthony Carter.



USSOCOM Images of 2012



Marines participating in the Ranger Amphibious Assault Course in Key West, Fla., March 19 through 30, learn how to right a capsized Zodiac. The Zodiac is a rigid hull inflatable boat that the students must become proficient in quickly putting together, piloting and righting if capsized. This training is part of the Marine Corps Special Operations Individual Training Course, which all students must complete before becoming a Critical Skills Operator. Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Larry W. Carpenter Jr.



A Marine attending the Individual Training Course patrols during the course's culminating exercise, Raider Spirit. Photo by Cpl. Thomas Provost.



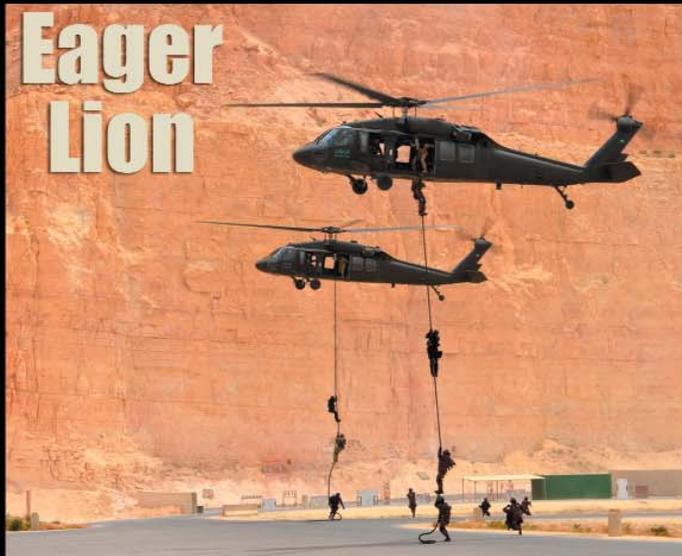
USSOCOM Images of 2012

Annual Exercises



Foal Eagle

Republic of Korea Navy SEALs from the Korean Naval Special Warfare Brigade assault the aft deck of the AOE-59 Hwachun – a Korean naval refueling vessel – in Jinhae Harbor, Republic of Korea, March 20, as part of Foal Eagle 2012 - a multinational, joint-service exercise focusing on tactical-based warfare throughout the peninsula of Korea. Both U.S. and ROK Navy SEALs fast-roped out of a MH-47 Chinook helicopter prior to boarding and conducted visit, board, search and seizure training. Photo by Army Capt. Michael Odgers.



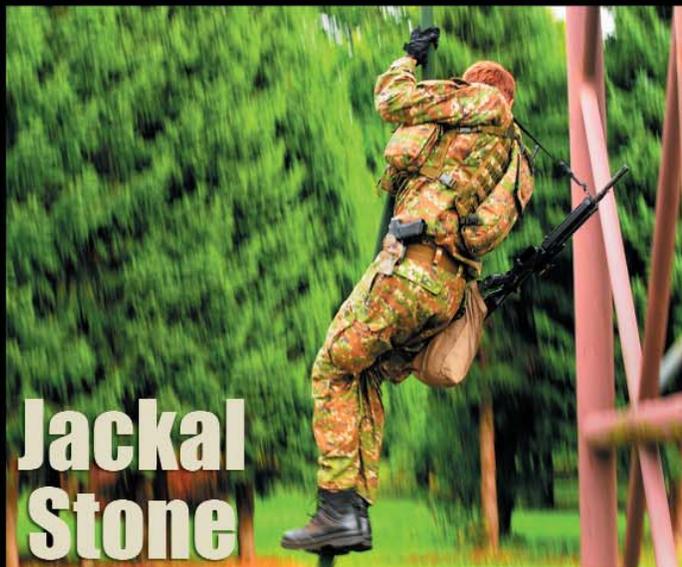
Eager Lion

Combined Joint Special Operations forces air assault onto a live-fire training objective during Exercise Eager Lion 12. Exercise Eager Lion is an irregular warfare themed exercise including 19 countries and more than 11,000 participants, focused on missions coalition partners might perform in support of contingency operations. Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Wynnfred Hoke.



Fuerzas Comando

A member of the U.S. Special Operations Forces competes in the rifle qualification event for Fuerzas Comando, June 7, at the Colombian National Training Center. Fuerzas Comando, established in 2004, is a U.S. Southern Command-sponsored Special Forces skills competition and senior leader seminar which is conducted annually. This event is aimed at enhancing training and strengthening regional and multinational cooperation, mutual trust, readiness and interoperability of Special Operations Forces in the region. Special Operations Command South serves as the U.S. execution agent for the exercise. Photo by Army Sgt. Karen Kozub.



Jackal Stone

A member of the Slovakian Armed Forces teaches fast-rope techniques in Delnice, Croatia, Sept. 14, during exercise Jackal Stone 2012. Jackal Stone is an annual joint Special Operations exercise designed to enhance capabilities and interoperability amongst the participating Special Operations Forces, as well as to build mutual respect while sharing various tactics, techniques and procedures. Photo by Senior Airman Jodi Martinez.



USSOCOM Images of 2012



USSOCOM Images of 2012



On June 12, Adm. Bill McRaven, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, awarded the Distinguished Service Cross to Chief Warrant Officer Jason W. Myers (left) and Staff Sgt. Corey M. Calkins, (right) both assigned to 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne). On March 27, 2010 Myers distinguished himself along a single lane road in the mountains of Afghanistan where his patrol was ambushed by an enemy force of approximately 75 to 100 insurgents. During this ambush Myers took command of the situation by directing movement, return fire and medical aid all while exposing himself to enemy machine guns and rocket propelled grenades. On Feb. 18, 2010 Calkins was part of a dismounted patrol consisting of U.S. Army, Marines and Afghan National Army Soldiers. During this patrol Calkins faced a formidable size enemy force in fortified positions. Facing this threat, Calkins assaulted his way through the area successfully suppressing the enemy force to allow the safe evacuation of three injured Marines. Photos by Army Staff Sgt. Marcus Butler.



People

Former Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz, (left) congratulates Capt. Barry Crawford after he presented both the Air Force Cross and Purple Heart to Crawford in the Hall of Heroes, at the Pentagon, in Washington, D.C., on April 12. Crawford was awarded the Air Force Cross for his heroic actions controlling the air space and calling in airstrikes during a 2010 battle in Afghanistan, which allowed his Special Operations team to get out of the kill zone and ultimately saved the lives of his American and Afghan comrades. Photo by Andy Morataya.

Adm. William H. McRaven, U.S. Special Operations Command commander, gives retired Air Force Master Sgt. Scott Fales USSOCOM's Bull Simons Award. This lifetime achievement award, named for Army Col. Arthur "Bull" Simons, honors the spirit, values, and skills of the unconventional warrior. Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Larry W. Carpenter Jr.



Retired Army veteran Melissa Stockwell lights the cauldron at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo., to officially kick off the 2012 Warrior Games. More than 200 wounded, ill or injured service members from the U.S. Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Special Operations Command competed in the Olympic-style competition May 1-5. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Heather Kelly.

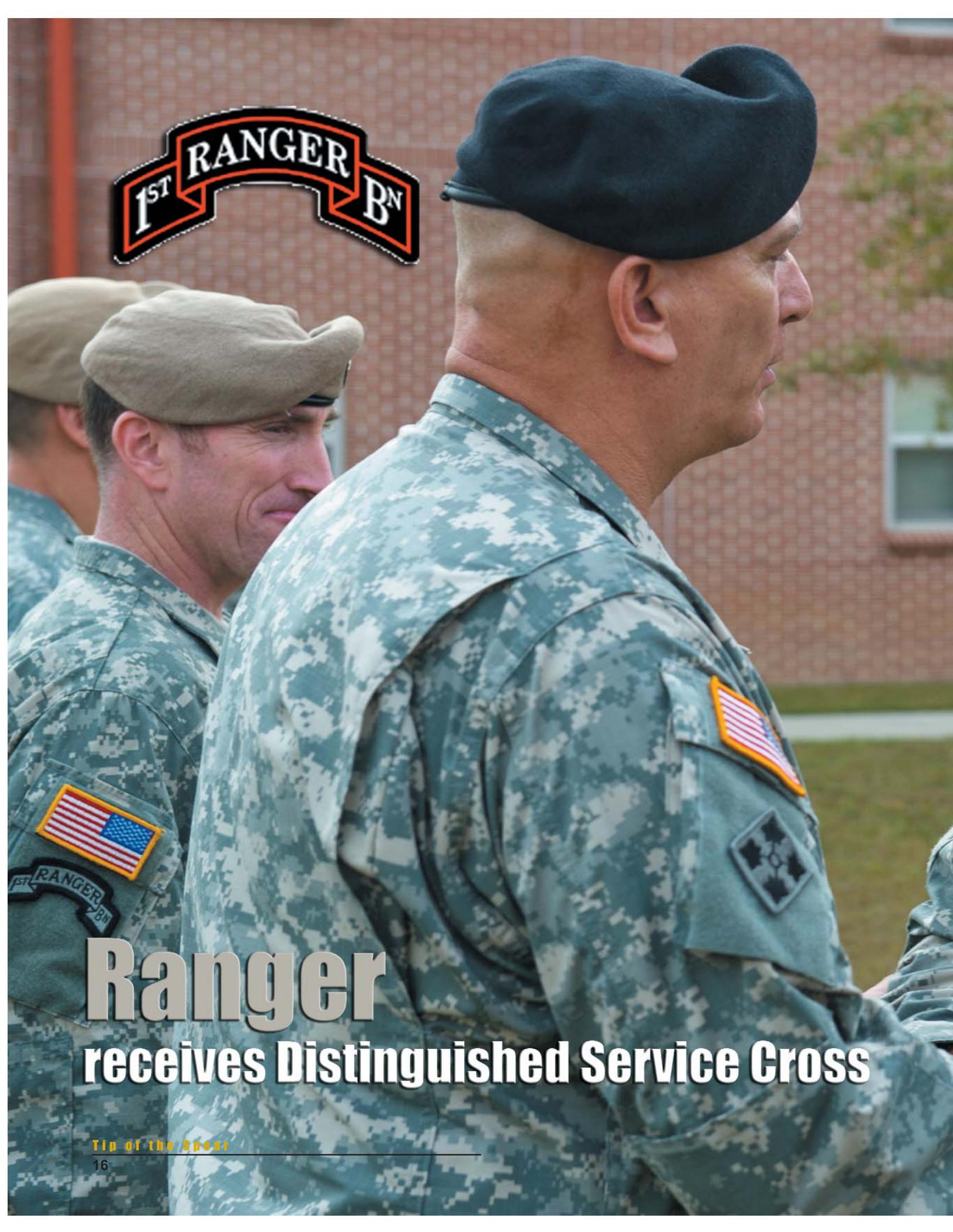


Army Master Sgt. Mike Morton, leads the pack of runners at the International Association of Ultrarunners 9th Annual 24 Hour World and 18th European Championships on Sept. 8 in Katowice, Poland. Morton, a U.S. Army Special Operations Command liaison officer, took first place and also broke the U.S. 24-hour record by running 172.457 miles. Courtesy photo.

People



USSOCOM Images of 2012



Ranger

receives Distinguished Service Cross



U.S. Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno presents the Distinguished Service Cross to Sgt. Craig Warfle, from Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, during an award ceremony at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., Oct. 26. Warfle received the award for his actions during combat operations in Afghanistan. Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Teddy Wade.

Distinguished Service Cross Citation for Specialist Craig D. Warfle

The following is the Distinguished Service Cross citation awarded to Specialist Craig D. Warfle. Warfle has subsequently been promoted to Sergeant.

**The President of the United States
Takes Pleasure in Presenting
The Distinguished Service Cross**

To

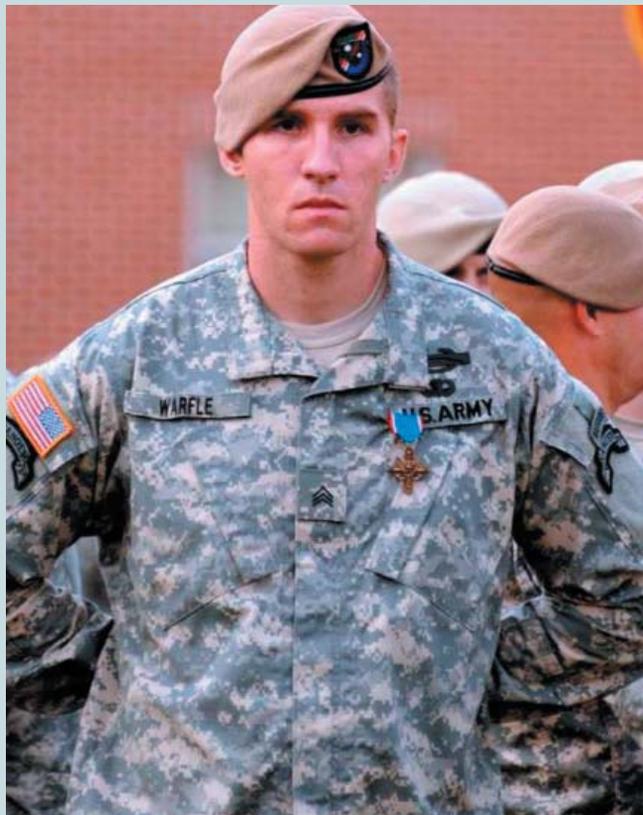
**Craig D. Warfle
Specialist, U.S. Army**

For Services as Set Forth in the Following

Specialist Craig D. Warfle distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous achievement as a Ranger Squad Automatic Weapons Gunner on August 18, 2010 while deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Specialist Warfle was assigned to a task force, whose mission was to capture or kill Al Qaeda (AQ) and Taliban (TB) Senior Leadership.

Specialist Warfle's valorous actions under effective fire while executing an objective saved the lives of his teammates and were instrumental in the death of at least 16 Taliban fighters, the removal of two Taliban Provincial Commanders, and the recovery of a large cache of weapons intended for use against Coalition Forces.

On August 18, 2010, the team received special intelligence indicating that a



Taliban Commander and weapons facilitator, was meeting near a tree line with at least 17 other Taliban fighters. Information gathered indicated that the enemy was orchestrating an ambush on Coalition Forces in Logar Province, Afghanistan.

The team observed the fighters in position for the attack to include multiple spotters and runners used to communicate between the various fighting locations. The Battle Space Owner was notified of the imminent threat and diverted all convoys. When the enemy fighters aborted their attack they were observed walking in a military formation back towards a meeting

site along a tree line. Enroute to that location the enemy fighters were positively identified to be carrying weapons.

The team initiated a kinetic strike on the fighter's location from two AH-64s. The team stood ready and boarded two CH-47 helicopters for insertion once the kinetic strike was complete.

Immediately after the kinetic strike, the team inserted a Ranger Element onto



the hot landing zone to the West of the target area to eliminate the several remaining enemy combatants.

Ranger Element 1, consisting of Specialist Warfle and five others, were tasked with isolating the Northern side of the tree line and suppressing the enemy to allow Ranger Element 2 to assault from West to East.

Upon infiltration, the Ranger Assault Force received effective enemy fire in vicinity of the North-South running tree line where the AH-64s had just completed gun runs. As soon as Specialist Warfle stepped off the ramp he came under fire from multiple enemy positions and without hesitation returned fire and crawled 15 meters through the muddy field towards the enemy.

From this position, Specialist Warfle suppressed the multiple enemy positions with 150 rounds from his MK-46 allowing Ranger Element 1 to move to the North and Ranger Element 2 to maneuver to the South. Under fire and with no cover in the open field, Specialist Warfle continued to suppress the enemy positions permitting members of the Assault Force to get down in the prone position while the leaders determined a way to assault the enemy positions.

After a couple of minutes passed, Ranger Element 2 came under heavy effective fire from enemy crew served weapons. Realizing that Ranger Element 2 was effectively pinned down in the open field to the South, Specialist Warfle moved with Sergeant Lugo to the North to flank the enemy position from the North-West.

Specialist Warfle, while under heavy effective enemy fire, advanced on the enemy position to suppress the enemy and allow the Assault Force to maneuver on and destroy the entrenched enemy. As Sergeant Lugo and Specialist Warfle voluntarily maneuvered towards the enemy positions they identified two entrenched enemy personnel with automatic weapons firing on the Assault Force.

Specialist Warfle continued to advance on the entrenched enemy using suppressive fire alone to protect Sergeant Lugo and himself because there was no available cover in open terrain. When Sergeant Lugo and Specialist Warfle got within 25 meters of the enemy machine gun positions, Specialist Warfle and Sergeant Lugo were both hit with a volley of machine gun fire.

Although Specialist Warfle knew he had been shot in the right shoulder he disregarded his own personal safety and moved through the kill zone to Sergeant Lugo's side to protect his incapacitated Squad Leader. Specialist Warfle purposefully positioned himself in the line of enemy fire and immediately suppressed the enemy in order to defend Sergeant Lugo and provide covering fire for the platoon medic, Sergeant Solomon, to move to and treat Sergeant Lugo.

Specialist Warfle fearlessly continued to provide accurate suppressive fire from his exposed position, allowing Staff Sergeant Myers and Sergeant Kochli the ability to move forward, suppress the enemy, and then subsequently evacuate Sergeant Lugo.

Specialist Warfle continued to provide suppressive fire as Sergeant Solomon, Staff Sergeant Tucker, and Sergeant Kochli pulled Sergeant Lugo back to cover. Only after the casualty evacuation aircraft evacuated Sergeant Lugo did Specialist Warfle treat the through

and through gunshot wound to his right shoulder by applying a tourniquet to his right arm.

Specialist Warfle then proceeded to engage the enemy position from a position between the enemy and the Platoon for over twenty minutes while the Assault Force reconsolidated and moved back away from the enemy positions. He steadfastly remained at his forward position delivering accurate

fire on the enemy until all members of the Assault Force had moved across the open field to cover 100 meters to the West.

Specialist Warfle bounded back to the West over the open field while the Assault Force provided suppressive fire. Specialist Warfle's actions allowed the Assault Force to break contact, drop ordnance on the enemy positions, and safely move to the exfiltration hot landing zone.

By repeatedly risking his life for others, Specialist Warfle's purposeful gallant actions, selfless dedication to the safety of his teammates, and demonstrated extraordinary heroism were distinctive and exemplary. He is most deserving of the distinct recognition.

Through his distinctive accomplishments, Specialist Warfle's personal actions reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

— Specialist Warfle continued to provide suppressive fire as Sergeant Solomon, Staff Sergeant Tucker, and Sergeant Kochli pulled Sergeant Lugo back to cover. Only after the casualty evacuation aircraft evacuated Sergeant Lugo, did Specialist Warfle treat the through and through gunshot wound to his right shoulder by applying a tourniquet to his right arm.



NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE COMMAND

UDT-SEAL Museum hosts 27th Annual Muster



Members of an East Coast-based SEAL team demonstrate a mock assault during a capabilities demonstration at the National UDT-SEAL Museum in Fort Pierce, Fla. on Nov. 10. The demonstration was part of the 27th Annual Muster and is held to raise awareness of the Naval Special Warfare community and as a reunion for veterans of the Scouts and Raiders, Underwater Demolition and SEAL teams. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Leslie N. Long.



***By Petty Officer 3rd Class James Ginther
Naval Special Warfare Group TWO***

The National UDT-SEAL museum in Fort Pierce, Fla., hosted the 27th Annual Muster honoring former and current Underwater Demolition Teams and Navy SEAL operators, Nov. 11-12.

More than 10,000 people attended the two-day event which featured a capabilities demonstration by an East Coast-based SEAL Team and guest speakers including Adm. William H. McRaven, Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command; U.S. Representative Allen West; and retired Navy SEAL Medal of Honor recipients Michael Thornton and Thomas Norris.

The capabilities demonstration included a SEAL Team performing a helicopter assault, simulated sniper shot and the use of a military working dog. The U.S. Navy SEAL Parachute team, the “Leap Frogs,” were also part of the demonstration and performed various aerial displays.

Tommy Norris, a former Navy SEAL, described the difficulties that the original UDT and SEAL teams faced during the Vietnam conflict.

“Through the efforts and the heroic courage of the members of those two units, legends were born within the teams,” said Norris. “Some of those legends are in the audience with you today...they won’t tell you who they are, but the team members know and I’m humbled to be in their presence.”

The ashes of eight fallen SEALs were laid to rest during a dedication ceremony on the beach adjacent to the museum. Active duty SEALs swam the ashes out to sea.

The museum also hosted a 5k run/walk on the beach next to the museum, a skeet shoot and a live auction.

McRaven said that the number of attendees had doubled since the previous

year.

“Twenty-seven years have passed since this museum opened,” said McRaven. “Back then there was some angst and curiosity as to whether this relatively small facility could even survive.”

He said that in the same way that the museum has grown and flourished, the Navy SEAL teams have expanded.

He remarked that the SEALs performing the demonstration exemplified the qualities that warriors require.

“The author Henry Stanley Haskins once said ‘what lies before and behind us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us’” said McRaven.



Active duty Navy SEALs carry the ashes of deceased Underwater Demolition and SEAL Team members during a ceremony hosted by the National UDT-SEAL Museum in Ft. Pierce, Fla., Nov. 11. Photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class James Ginther.



EOD tech earns Silver Star

*By Airman 1st Class Hayden K. Hyatt
1st Special Operations Wing Public Affairs*

An Air Commando from the 1st Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron received a Silver Star during a ceremony at the Pentagon Nov. 14.

Tech. Sgt. Joseph Deslauriers, an explosive ordnance disposal technician, earned the medal for gallantry in action while serving in Afghanistan Sep. 23, 2011.

“You see this room filled with all these people and my family here,” Deslauriers said. “To hear ‘the most decorated EOD tech in the career field’—it’s an honor for me to be here.”

According to the award’s citation, Deslauriers rendered one improvised explosive device inoperative and conducted a post-blast analysis of three subsequent detonations all within a four-hour time frame. After doing so, he then provided medical aid to an injured service member and used his detector to clear a safe path for the medical evacuation helicopter to land.

While clearing the area, Deslauriers stepped on an initiation system for an IED. Despite sustaining grave injuries, and as his teammates treated him with aid, he continued to pass information about the device that helped his team continue the mission. His actions led to the extraction of two injured Marines, two vehicles and completion of the mission.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Airmen use their training to dispose of anything from roadside bombs to decommissioned missiles, all to save lives.

“We talked about honor, sacrifice, and courage,” the triple amputee said. “But we don’t think about that stuff – we just do what we do, and we love it. I’d do it all over again.”

Deslauriers said he felt honored to be standing in the



Col. James Slife, commander, 1st Special Operations Wing, presents the citation to accompany the Silver Star to Tech. Sgt. Joseph Deslauriers during a ceremony at the Pentagon on Nov. 14. The decoration is awarded for gallantry in military action against an enemy of the United States. Photo by Michael J. Pausic.

Pentagon's Hall of Heroes, a place that honors the memory of hundreds of service members including Medal of Honor recipients.

“You belong here,” said retired Gen. Norton Schwartz, former Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

“Thank you, sir,” Deslauriers said. “To hear that from you is a great honor and from everybody here.”

The Silver Star is the third highest military decoration for valor and is given for gallantry in action against enemies of the United States.

Former CSAF nominated for The Order of the Sword

*By Senior Airman Joe McFadden
1st Special Operations Wing Public Affairs*

With no stars, bars, eagles or oak leaves among their multitude of stripes, the enlisted force of the Air Force Special Operations Command nominated their former Chief of Staff of the Air Force for his induction into The Order of the Sword at Hurlburt Field, Fla., Nov. 15.

Retired Gen. Norton Schwartz, accompanied by his wife, Suzie, accepted the nomination from Chief Master Sgt. Bill Turner, command chief of AFSOC, in front of more than 300 Air Commandos who lined the road along the distinguished visitor quarters' parking lot.

"We thank you for your 39 years of service," Turner said. "For those 39 years, you and Mrs. Schwartz were our best teammates. You gave it your all and took great care of this force. And because of you, we are the Air Force that we are."

The command chief then presented Schwartz, who served three tours at Hurlburt Field, a plaque bearing the nomination on behalf of the 11,000 enlisted men and women serving around the world under the AFSOC enterprise.

"We accept!" Schwartz said, to the applause of the crowd. "We remain an honorary chief here, so how sweet it is to close the book on this so many years later. Thank you very much."

The retired general, who once served as commander of the current 1st Special Operations Wing, remarked on the continuing legacy of both AFSOC and the wing.

"It all started for us here in the fall of 1980," Schwartz said. "For those of you who don't think that amazing things can happen in our Air Force, this is proof. You're in a wonderful business. People know that if someone does bad things to America, this community will find them and make them pay. Do it professionally, do it discreetly, do it without fanfare -- you just do it. That's what you're a part of -- all of you. It doesn't matter what discipline -- everybody counts, especially in Special Operations."

Schwartz will become the eighth inductee into AFSOC's Order, an honor based upon significant



Retired U.S. Air Force Gen. Norton Schwartz, former Chief of Staff of the Air Force, left, listens as Chief Master Sgt. Bill Turner, command chief of Air Force Special Operations Command, welcomes him back to Hurlburt Field while outside the distinguished visitors quarters at Hurlburt Field, Fla., Nov. 15. Turner then informed Schwartz of his nomination to be inducted into The Order of the Sword, the highest honor the enlisted corps can bestow upon an individual in recognition of significant contributions to the enlisted force. Photo by Airman 1st Class Christopher Williams.

contributions to the enlisted force.

"Thank you very much for this special treat for Suzie and me," he said. "We envy you, we miss it already. So it will be fun to watch you continue to improve and continue to make the mark of Air Force Special Operations and the SOW -- any time, any place."

According to Air Force Instruction 36-2824, "The Order of the Sword was established by the Air Force to recognize and honor military senior officers, colonel and above, and civilian equivalents, for conspicuous and significant contributions to the welfare and prestige of the Air Force enlisted force, mission effectiveness as well as the overall military establishment."

The AFSOC Order of the Sword induction ceremony is slated for Feb. 1, 2013 at the Emerald Coast Conference Center in Fort Walton Beach, Fla.



AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



U.S. Air Force Special Operations Weather Teams participate in a training scenario on a CH-47 Chinook during Emerald Warrior, Hurlburt Field, Fla., March 7. Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Clay Lancaster.

Past, present Special Operations Weather Teams shape elite career field

*By Senior Airman Melanie Holochwost
AFSOC Public Affairs*

The Special Operations Weather Team is one of the newest career fields in the Air Force, officially created just three years ago. However, this grey beret-wearing unit has been around since 1963, originally known as the Commando Combat Weather Team stationed at Hurlburt Field, Fla.

To remember their past and unique heritage, the Grey Beret Association was formed in May 2012 and recently named seven SOWT veterans to its hall of fame.

Selected for their outstanding service record were Keith Grimes, Joseph Conaty Jr., Cornelius Gray,

Ronald Kellerman, Lloyd Mitchell Jr., Charles Irby, and Henry Kelley.

These seven men laid the foundation for the SOWT career field as it is known today.

According to Kelley, today's SOWTs have gone through a drastically different process than he did as a member of the original team.

"At first, there was no selection process whatsoever," Kelley said. "One day a colonel came up to me and said, 'you look like you're in pretty good shape ... take the rest of the week off, you're going to jump school on Monday.'"

As an airman second class, Col. (Ret) Wayne Golding said he made the team because he picked a piece of paper from a hat that read, "You are a

commando.” Then, just moments later he was selected as the acting NCO-in-charge because he wore the largest boots of the selectees.

Although these selection practices were pretty clever, the selectees were dropping left and right, mainly due to a lack of mental strength and fortitude, according to Golding.

“We definitely learned some things along the way,” he said. “After we noticed how horrible our retention rates were, we had potential recruits come to our unit and stay with us for about a week to sort of test them out and get to know their personalities. We made sure they were going to be alright. And, it seemed to work because we stopped losing people.”

Fast-forward about five decades, and the selection process is much more intense -- designed not to just retain, but to find the most elite warfighters.

Now, SOWT candidates must be able to swim 25-meters underwater twice, surface swim for 500-meters in less than 14 minutes, run 1.5 miles in less than 10 minutes and 10 seconds, and perform at least eight pull ups in a minute, 48 sit ups in two minutes, and 48 pushups in two minutes.

“That’s just the beginning,” said Maj. John Syc, 10th Combat Weather Squadron SOWT operations director. “After they begin training, they are expected to greatly improve on those numbers.”

Although the job has evolved over time, one constant between past and present is training. SOWTs have always trained hard.

During the first few years, training was trial and error, Golding said.

“We didn’t have any good roadmaps for training when we started in 1963,” he said. “By 1964, we went through parachute training and survival school (now called Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape training). We also trained on Morse Code, learned second languages and became experts in every weapon we used.”

Since then, SOWTs have been steadily expanding on those training requirements.

“We now have a very structured training regimen that is scheduled several months in advance,” said Capt. David Mack, 10th CWS SOWT. “Basically, when we are not deployed, our job is training.”

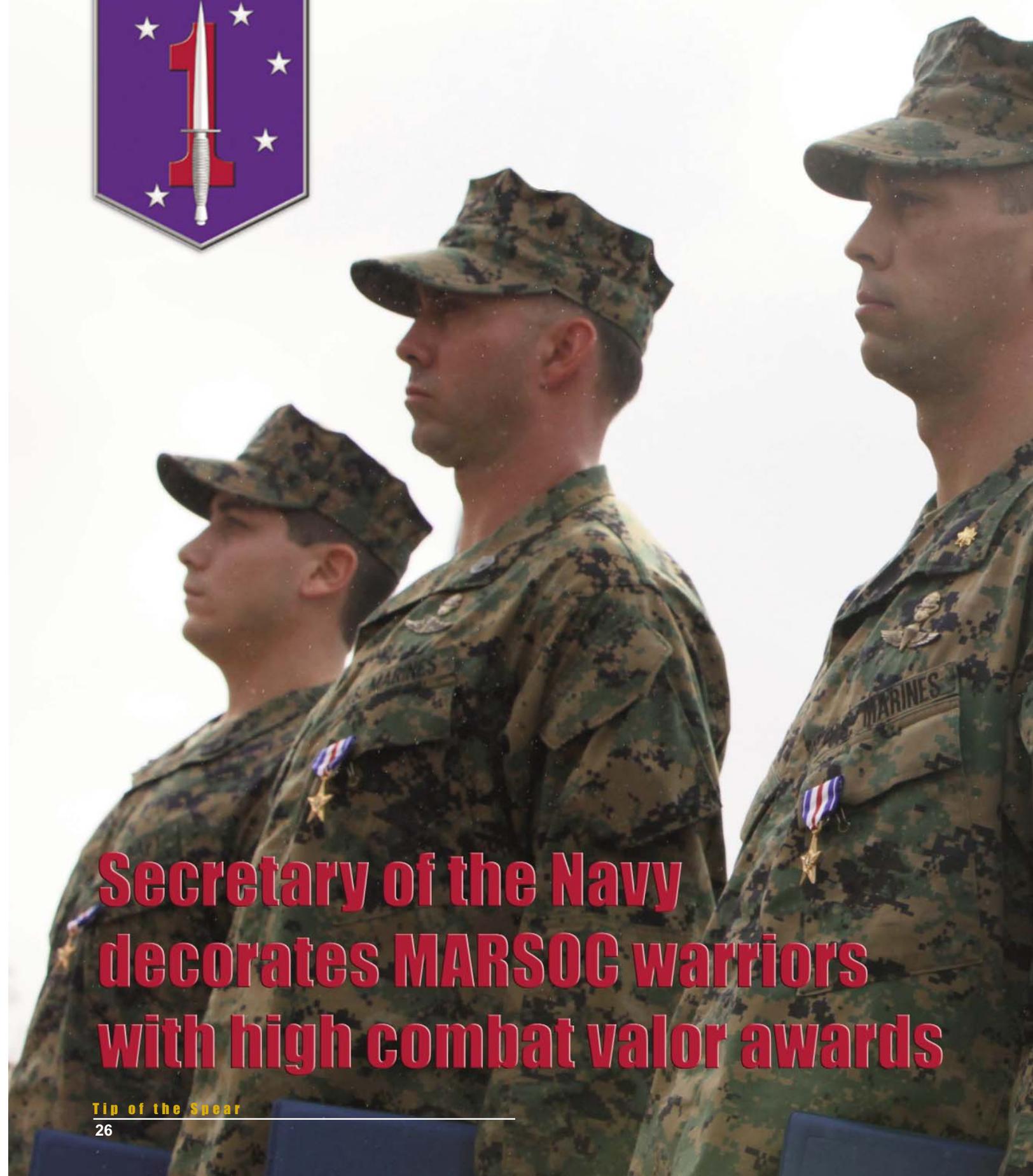
The training is about 70 percent weather-related and 30 percent tactical, according to Mack.

“It’s split up this way because if we are unable to do our jobs (as weathermen), we aren’t of much value to the mission,” he said. “But, the mission requires us to become ‘jacks of all trades.’ Not only do we need to know our primary jobs, but we also need to know something about maintenance, logistics, and several other career fields, since we deploy in such small teams.”

Over the course of 50 years, the SOWT career field has adapted from casual beginnings to a very strict and structured present. SOWTs are selected from the best of the best and they train every day to ensure they are uniformly qualified for the dynamic demands of the mission.



A five-man Special Operations Weather Team participates in avalanche and environmental reconnaissance training. This type of training is usually completed in locations like Wyoming or Alaska, where they can hone their avalanche prediction skills. Courtesy photo.



**Secretary of the Navy
decorates MARSOC warriors
with high combat valor awards**



(From left to right) Petty Officer 1st Class Patrick B. Quill, Staff Sgt. Frankie J. Shinost, Maj. James T. Rose and Sgt. William B. Soutra Jr. of 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, stand at attention after being awarded the nation's second and third highest awards for combat valor by Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus at 1st MSOB headquarters aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif. Dec. 3. Soutra was awarded the Navy Cross, and Rose, Shinost and Quill were each awarded the Silver Star for extraordinary heroism exhibited during a combat mission in Helmand Province, Afghanistan nearly two years ago. Photo illustration by Marine Corps Cpl. Kyle McNally.



MARINE CORPS FORCES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



Sgt. William B. Soutra, Jr., was awarded a Navy Cross during a ceremony aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Dec. 3, for heroism while serving as a canine handler with Company B, 1st MSOB, in Helmand province, Afghanistan, during July 2010. Soutra's unit was on patrol with Afghan commandos when his unit became pinned down by an ambush initiated by an improvised explosive device that mortally wounded his element leader. Soutra directed and oriented friendly fires while relaying enemy information, further enabling aircraft to provide suppression and coordinating casualty evacuations.

*Story and photo by Marine Corps Cpl. Kyle McNally
MARSOC Public Affairs*

In a rare public ceremony, four silent warriors from the 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, were recognized with the nation's second and third-highest awards for combat valor in a Dec. 3rd ceremony aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus and MARSOC

commander Maj. Gen. Mark A. Clark presented Sgt. William B. Soutra Jr. with the Navy Cross, and awarded the Silver Star to Maj. James T. Rose, Staff Sgt. Frankie J. Shinost and Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Patrick B. Quill for the extraordinary heroism they exhibited during a combat mission in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, nearly two years ago.

Then deployed with Company B, 1st MSOB, the Marines and their Afghan Commando partners were tasked with a critical mission in the bloody district of Nahr-e

Saraj. Their objective was to capture an insurgent bomb factory and disrupt the enemy's activity in the area.

After two days of brutal fighting, and with the patrol's water and ammunition quickly diminishing, the violence culminated with an improvised explosive device blast that triggered an insurgent ambush and left element leader Staff Sgt. Chris Antonik mortally wounded.

According to Clark, the men he and Mabus recognized on a drizzly December morning at 1st MSOB's headquarters displayed "great heroism, extraordinary bravery and conspicuous gallantry" in the harrowing moments that followed.

Soutra, then a dog handler, and Quill, the team corpsman, received the distress call from Antonik as they were making their way back from another platoon's position with a partial resupply of ammo. Before they could move further, their position erupted with flurries of insurgent machinegun and mortar fire. Pinned down, their Commando partner force became disoriented.

According to his citation, Soutra then "immediately and boldly took charge."

"Moving exposed down the line," he signaled the Commandos to concentrate their fire on the enemy's position, often physically maneuvering them to do so. With his platoon oriented, he and Quill then rushed into the kill zone to find Antonik.

After moving 150 meters through swarms of machinegun fire, they reached the blast site, where Antonik lay semi-conscious beside a wounded Commando. With rounds zipping past, Quill immediately went to work rendering lifesaving aid to Antonik, shielding him with his own body. Soutra applied tourniquets to the wounded Commando's legs. After dragging him to a ditch for cover, Soutra returned to Quill, only to discover that Antonik could not be moved hastily due to his injuries. All three men stayed in the kill zone, despite the intensifying enemy fire.

Rose was listening to the deteriorating situation on his radio. With the ambush site's dense vegetation rendering air support impossible, Rose organized a quick reaction force to

attack the enemy compound that was pinning down Soutra's Commando platoon. The QRF, which included Shinost, the team's Joint Terminal Attack Controller, charged through volleys of small arms fire directly at the enemy's position. While engaging targets, Shinost managed to pinpoint an enemy position in the southern treeline, and directed a surgical A-10 airstrike that destroyed the threat.

With the enemy temporarily disoriented, Soutra and Quill carried Antonik to safety. Rose and Shinost continued

to engage the insurgents in the compound, who now concentrated the majority of their fires on them. Rose stood fast, engaging targets less than 50 meters away. The fire was so intense that a bullet severed his rifle sling.

Shinost repeatedly exposed himself to the barrage, locking on targets for the A-10s and marking a drop zone for the MEDEVAC helicopter. Coordinating with Soutra to identify insurgent positions, Shinost directed his aircraft to silence the enemy guns for good with a final airstrike.

After more than 48 hours of sustained fighting, the Marines and the Commandos pulled out. They had destroyed the bomb factory, and had killed approximately 50 enemy fighters.

Antonik was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star with combat "V."

According to their citations, Soutra, Rose, Shinost and Quill each "epitomized" their respective combat roles, and their actions saved the lives of their fellow Marines and Commandos. Additionally, SSgt. Bradley A. Harless, who is currently on deployment, will be presented a Bronze Star with V upon his return for his heroic actions during the same operation.

"This is a chance to recognize people who don't get recognized much," said Mabus. "Most of their missions are classified, most of the time we don't hear anything about them or the extraordinary actions they take on a daily basis. And to be able to do this publicly, to recognize these four extraordinary human beings...is very special for me, for the Marine Corps, for the Navy, and for the country."

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— Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus



MARINE CORPS FORCES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

MARSOC Marines return from Afghan deployment



A Marine with U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, watches a CH-47 Chinook helicopter depart after delivering Marines and Afghan Commandos to Farah province for a two-day presence patrol Feb. 27. Marines with MARSOC's 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion recently returned from a nine-month deployment to Afghanistan, where they commanded the Special Operations Task Force - West and oversaw one of Afghanistan's bloodiest regions.

*Story and photos by Cpl. Kyle McNally
MARSOC Public Affairs*

Marines with the 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, returned recently from a demanding nine-month deployment, where as part of Special Operations Task Force – West, they commanded three companies of U.S. Special Operations Forces and oversaw one of Afghanistan's bloodiest regions.

The deployment marks the third time MARSOC Marines have taken command of a SOTF downrange. As in past deployments, their accomplishments were numerous. SOTF-West, which oversaw more than one-third of Afghanistan's land mass, including Helmand, Nimroz, Farah, Herat, Ghor and Badghis provinces, became the first Special Operations task force to effectively transition an entire province to government of Afghanistan control. The transfer of Badghis, which was one of Afghanistan's most kinetic areas as recently as last year, marks the rapidity of SOTF-West's progress in the region.

Perhaps SOTF-West's most noteworthy accomplishment was its thrust into the upper Gereshk valley, Nahr-e Saraj district, Helmand province; an area relatively untouched by coalition forces, and according to a SOTF report, one that is "the most violent district in all of Afghanistan." SOTF-West designed and led an operation that consolidated over 14,000 troops from SOF, conventional, U.S. and international forces alike. The push into Nahr-e Saraj saw the establishment of three new coalition sites in the one-time insurgent stronghold, and allowed SOF to begin training and mentoring local Afghan defense forces in accordance with their Village Stability Operations mission.

VSO is U.S. Special Operations Command's answer to the complicated issues of Afghan self-governance and the stabilization of security and socioeconomic conditions; objectives that are becoming increasingly critical as the clock winds down to 2014. VSO provides a platform for Afghans to secure their nation, develop it, and govern it almost entirely through their own efforts.

To do this, SOF embeds themselves into Afghan villages and gains the trust of locals. They develop



Marines with U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, prepare to board CH-47 Chinook helicopters as part of a two-day presence patrol with Afghan Commandos in Farah province Feb. 27.

and train an Afghan Local Police force, and legitimize the local government by working through it to address sources of instability for individual villages.

The mission is difficult, but SOCOM has made considerable gains.

MARSOC, though relatively new to special operations, has effectively kept stride with its veteran SOF peers since its inception in early 2006. MARSOC operators attribute this smooth integration to their Marine Corps roots.

"We grew up in the Marine Corps, so we all have a combined arms mindset," said a team leader with 1st MSOB. "Other organizations don't train to the combined arms mindset like we do."

"The Marine Corps is the smallest service," added an Explosive Ordnance Disposal technician with 1st MSOB. "We have to do more with less. And we pride ourselves on the fact that we can do more with less, and I think that transfers over to the MARSOC realm."

Ultimately, however, MARSOC's strength lies in the abilities of its individual Marines, and the fraternal bonds that only combat can forge, said the EOD technician.

"It's a family; it's an absolute brotherhood," he said. "These guys live for each other every day, and it's an honor to be a part of that."



MARINE CORPS FORCES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

Photos by Marine Corps Cpl. Kyle McNally.



A 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion Marine patrols through poppy fields in Nahr-e Saraj district, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, April 3. Marines with MARSOC's 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion recently returned from a nine-month deployment to Afghanistan, where they commanded the Special Operations Task Force - West.



Afghan National Army Special Forces soldiers provide security as a convoy of Marines with the 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, and Marines with U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command, move into Nahr-e Saraj district, Helmand province, Afghanistan, June 20.



MARSOC Marines and Afghan Commandos conduct a two-day presence patrol in Farah province, Afghanistan, Feb. 27.

Tip of the Spear



A MARSOC Marine provides security at a landing zone in Nahr-e Saraj district, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, March 28.



A MARSOC Marine waits in ambush for insurgents during a joint patrol with Afghan National Army Special Forces soldiers in Nahr-e Saraj district, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, April 3.



An Afghan National Army Special Forces soldier hands out soccer cleats to local children during a joint patrol with Marines from U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Special Operations Command in Nahr-e Saraj district, Helmand province, Afghanistan, March 15.



U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND - HEADQUARTERS

USSOCOM wins first-ever DOD Better Buying Power Efficiency Award

*By Beth Ritter and Mike Bottoms
SORDAC Director's Action Group and USSOCOM
Public Affairs*

A Special Forces A-Team is on patrol in Helmand province, Afghanistan, when it suddenly comes under attack. An improvised explosive device is detonated and two Special Forces Soldiers are badly wounded. A medic rushes in through the acrid smoke and sees one Soldier with a badly injured lower torso and the other with a ruptured femoral artery. The medic applies an Abdominal Aortic

Tourniquet from his Casualty Evacuation Kit to the Operator with the badly injured torso, stopping the flow of blood. The medic decides to use a Combat Ready Clamp to stop the flow of blood from the Soldier with the femoral artery wound. The medic then pulls out freeze dried plasma developed by French scientists to treat both Soldiers and saves their lives.

Two years ago the medic would not have had the Casualty Evacuation Set with the specialized tourniquets, clamps, and medical instrumentation; thus, saving the lives of the Soldiers would have been much more difficult.



From left to right) Col. Joseph Capobianco; Mr. Tom Mills; Ms. Leatrice Frederick; the Honorable Frank Kendall, under secretary of defense, acquisition, technology and logistics; Ms. Stephanie Elder; Mr. James Cluck; and Master Sgt. Kyle Sims stand after the Special Operations Research, Development, and Acquisition Center and its Acquisition Rapid Response Medical Team for Tactical Combat Casualty Care and Casualty Evacuation were selected as the first-ever recipient of DOD's of the Better Buying Power Efficiency Award for fielding the Special Operations-peculiar life-saving kit in less than two years. Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Chad J. McNeeley.

The Special Operations Research, Development, and Acquisition Center and its Acquisition Rapid Response Medical Team for Tactical Combat Casualty Care and Casualty Evacuation were selected as the first-ever recipient of DOD's newest award: the Better Buying Power Efficiency Award for fielding the Special Operations-peculiar life-saving kit in less than two years. The award was presented to Army Col. Joseph Capobianco, program executive officer for SOF warrior systems, and his team on Nov. 2, by Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta during a ceremony at the Pentagon.

"Success has many fathers," said Capobianco. "We used the SOF acquisition model which streamlines the acquisition process and made sure we had inclusivity and ownership from the Special Operator, the contracting office, and the combat and material developers."

Capability gaps were identified in Special Operations Forces battlefield trauma care assessment by operators in the field, driving the need for a modernized, modular Casualty Evacuation Set.

The PEO Survival staff and Program Manager SOF Survival, Support, and Equipment Systems teams coordinated with each of USSOCOM's component surgeons to create a joint service, multi-talented team to develop, test, and field the Casualty Evacuation System set, offering a multitude of pioneering capabilities to attend to casualties under a variety of conditions at the point of injury on the battlefield, often times in remote, denied access areas.

"Each of the component's surgeons and their supporting combat medics were part of the acquisition and contracting process from the very beginning," said Duke Dunnigan, director of operations, program executive office, SOF warrior systems. "Their medical expertise was critical to successfully complete the field evaluations of medical equipment provided as bid samples by industry."

"A strong partnership formed with our team medics and is why we were successful in fielding the Casualty Evacuation Set in record time," said Dr. John Parson, program executive officer SOF warrior systems.

The team led the way in developing and widely fielding a comprehensive, modularly configured Casualty Evacuation set, enabling ground units to provide innovative, life-saving medical treatments at the point of injury to stabilize the casualty; and provide mobility to deliver a casualty from a remote, inaccessible area to a

ground or air extraction platform for transport to a field medical hospital.

"We packaged Casualty Evacuation Set so that all of the medical supplies could be immediately accessed," said Stephanie Elder, assistant program manager, tactical combat casualty care, SOF survival, support, and equipment systems. "The kit is modular, easy to transport, and we have received positive feedback from the Special Operators."

The acquisition team developed a Combat Ready Clamp and an Abdominal Aortic Tourniquet, two medical devices to achieve, within the "golden hour," life-saving hemorrhage control on groin and abdominal wounds previously considered non-treatable at the point of injury. The team also successfully navigated through intense regulatory hurdles to gain approval for the use of a French freeze dried plasma product that can be reconstituted at the point of injury and administered to prevent shock and death from hemorrhaging at the point of injury.

"We went through 1.2 million data points to score the equipment," said Thomas Mills, program manager and lead material developer from SOF survival, support, and equipment systems. "The scoring allowed us to scientifically select the best medical equipment and we fielded 56 kits to the Special Operator by June 2012 and the fielding of kits will continue through fiscal year 2015."

The SOCOM accelerated acquisition process utilized a combined developmental and operational testing approach to compress normal acquisition cycle times. Equally as important to the accelerated acquisition process were the contributions from the contracting office.

"Our office was brought in at the very beginning of this project," said Susan Griffin, contracting officer, procurement directorate, SORDAC. "It only took four months for us to get the project off the ground and we supported the effort to the end."

The Casualty Evacuation Set acquisition process was efficient because affordable, off-the-shelf technology was utilized, reducing a normal acquisition time from start to finish from five to two years. The use of existing technology and the speed the technology was put in the warfighter's hands are why the team was selected for the Better Buying Power Efficiency Award.

"We leveraged an established solution to solve a capability gap," Capobianco said. "We closed that capability gap with effective, timely, and affordable technologies. What our team did will save lives."



U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND - HEADQUARTERS

Founding of the Joint Special Operations University

The evolution of Joint Special Operations Forces education

By Rick Green
USSOCOM History & Research Office

Today's Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) traces its origins to the legislation that established U.S. Special Operations Command itself. That legislation directed USSOCOM to conduct specialized courses of instruction for commissioned and non-commissioned officers and to monitor the professional military education of SOF personnel.

The first effort to establish a joint SOF organization of higher learning began under Gen. Wayne Downing in 1993. USSOCOM 13-Training (13-T) was tasked to develop a proposal and, based on input from the components and senior SOF leaders, it modeled the University after the Army's Training and Doctrine Command. 13-T called their proposal the Joint Special Operations Forces Institute (JSOFI) and, to ensure it was viewed as joint, recommended that it be based at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., and report to the USSOCOM J5. Downing approved the concept in April 1994.

But the J5 was not prepared to assume oversight of JSOFI, so Downing directed it be situated at Ft. Bragg under the purview of the commander of the Army Special Warfare Center and School (SWCS), with the SWCS commander dual-hatted as the school's commandant. Ironically, Downing had all along wanted JSOFI moved to Ft. Bragg and away from the USSOCOM headquarters so it could work independently, believing SWCS and the associated museum were repositories of SOF knowledge.

As coordinator for SOF professional military education and training, JSOFI conducted numerous conferences, coordinated the guest-speaker program, developed joint and common SOF manuals and directives, and reviewed joint-doctrine



Gen Wayne A. Downing

publications. JSOFI developed computer-based training and also wrote the first SOF reference manual in 1997, which provided a single reference on SOF components and a platform to facilitate unit- and staff-level war games.

Still, some viewed JSOFI as having a flawed organization that was neither truly joint nor speaking for the USSOCOM commander on joint issues. This was due in part to its collocation with and appearance of being imbedded within SWCS.

This perception may have contributed to the USSOCOM board of directors' decision in 1996 when it voted to disestablish JSOFI within two years. JSOFI was saved for the moment when Gen. Henry Shelton, USSOCOM's commander from 1996-97, intervened. The manning for JSOFI, however, was reduced.

The loss of billets raised the question whether JSOFI could still function, and in the summer of 1997 USSOCOM stood up a process action



team assigned to relook JSOFI in multiple areas, including manning, location, and reporting senior. In July, The SOJ5/7 outlined the team's results and the USSOCOM commander's decision. Shelton accepted the recommendations to keep JSOFI at Ft. Bragg and to change the commandant position to an O6 who would report to USSOCOM, where it was put under Maj. Gen. Maxwell C. Bailey in the Operations and Plans Center. Before that occurred, however, the decision was made to disband JSOFI and move those functions back to USSOCOM. This was briefed to the new USSOCOM commander, Gen. Pete Schoomaker, who approved the plan. JSOFI was given one year to move and in 1998 was disestablished.

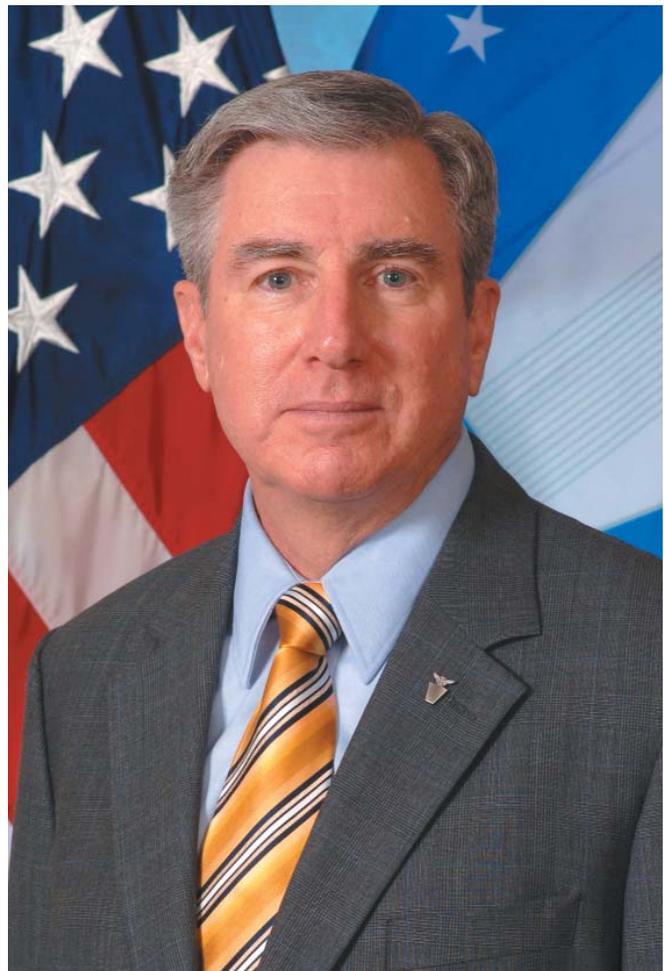
The disestablishment of JSOFI did not end what some saw as a need for an organization outside of USSOCOM to work through the professional military education system to instruct the joint community on the utility of SOF. Discussions started again in 1999 about establishing a SOF university, and the idea gathered support after multiple briefings to Schoomaker and the USSOCOM staff. The difference would be that, whereas the JSOFI had been a staff element that coordinated instruction, the new institution would be in the business of delivering instruction.

Modeled on the U.S. Air Force Special Operations School at Hurlburt Field, Fla., JSOU was established on June 15, 2000, at Hurlburt Field. Its original charter stated that "JSOU is a direct reporting, unified, subordinate element of USSOCOM and shall be organized to facilitate Title 10 responsibilities of the CINC [commander in chief] to conduct specialized courses of instruction for commissioned and noncommissioned officers and to monitor the professional military education of SOF officers." The USSOCOM Board of Directors was designated as the JSOU Board of Regents.

In establishing JSOU, Schoomaker noted that the school would leverage and enhance existing joint and service professional military education programs. JSOU provided education to U.S. SOF and to the people who enable the SOF mission in a joint environment. In addition to the regular courses, JSOU conducted both regular and tailored activities for SOF units worldwide by means of remote on-site instruction and video tele-instruction.

In 2008, USSOCOM designated the president of

JSOU, Dr. Brian A. Maher, as "the joint SOF educational component of USSOCOM" and to "serve as the USSOCOM Lead Component for all matters pertaining to joint SOF education." In 2010 JSOU relocated to a new campus near MacDill and that same year conducted the first Joint Special Operations Force Senior Enlisted Academy Course. The school has continued to grow and expand its reach. During the 2011 academic year, JSOU saw 5,976 students pass through its doors, a 25 percent increase over the previous year. JSOU was also recognized as part of USSOCOM's International Engagement Program, and, among its many accomplishments, was the deployment of Joint Mobile Education Teams to 26 countries.



Dr. Brian A. Maher is president, Joint Special Operations University. Courtesy photo.





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**Army Sgt.
Clinton K. Ruiz
9th Military Information Support
Battalion (Airborne)**

Editor's note: Honored are Special Operations Forces who lost their lives since October's Tip of the Spear.

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A combat rescue officer rides a minibike at the Camp Shelby Auxiliary Field runway during the Emerald Warrior exercise March 3. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Charles Larkin Sr.