



Staff Sergeant Ronald J. Shurer II

MEDAL OF HONOR

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

President Donald Trump awarded the Medal of Honor to former Staff Sgt. Ronald J. Shurer on 1 October 2018 at the White House in Washington, D.C. The award was an upgrade from the Silver Star that Shurer previously received for his actions on 6 April 2008 while serving as a medical sergeant in Shok Valley, Afghanistan, during Operation Commando Wrath.

While on a mission to capture or kill high-value targets associated with Hizb-e-Islami Gulbuddin, an anticoalition extremist group, Shurer's unit began receiving heavy fire, forcing it into a defensive posture. When he heard that the unit's forward assault element was pinned down and taking casualties, Shurer disregarded the enemy fire and moved quickly to reach the forward element.

For over six hours, he rendered medical aid to wounded U.S. and Afghan soldiers while helping keep the large insurgent force from overrunning friendly positions. In the process, he exposed himself

repeatedly to enemy fire and was shot in the helmet and wounded in the arm. However, the arm injury and close call to the head did not deter him from assisting with casualty evacuation down a near-vertical, sixty-foot cliff. Shurer's actions helped save the lives of all the wounded casualties under his care.

The president described the situation in Shok Valley on that day as "a tough, tough situation to be in."

"Ron climbed the rocky mountain, all the while fighting back against the enemy and dodging gunfire left and right," said Trump. "Rockets were shot at him. Everything was shot at him."

Trump described Shurer as "an inspiration to everyone in this room and to every citizen all across our great land."

Shurer was inducted into the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes the day after the Medal of Honor ceremony. He now serves in the U.S. Secret Service.

You can read more about this great American on the Army's Medal of Honor website at https://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/shurer/?from=hp_spotlight. ■





Master Sergeant Matthew O. Williams

MEDAL OF HONOR

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In the words of President Donald Trump, as he awarded the Medal of Honor to Master Sgt. Matthew Williams on 30 October 2019 at a White House ceremony in Washington, D.C., “Your spirit keeps our flag waving high, our families safe at home, and our hearts beating with American pride. On behalf of the entire nation—our great USA, our incredible United States of America—we are forever grateful for your life of service and your outstanding courage.”

Williams received the award for his actions on 6 April 2008 in Shok Valley, Afghanistan, during Operation Commando Wrath. His unit’s mission was to capture or kill high-value targets associated with Hizb-e-Islami Gulbuddin, an anticoalition extremist group.

Then-Sgt. Williams, a Special Forces weapons sergeant, was moving up a mountain as part of an assault force comprised of U.S. soldiers and Afghan commandos when the force suddenly came under intense machine gun and rocket-propelled grenade fire. The entire force was pinned down by the ambush, and the

lead portion sustained several casualties and was in danger of being overrun.

Demonstrating extreme courage and leadership, Williams took charge of the Afghans around him and led them under fire up the mountain to a position where they could suppress the enemy and protect the lead element. Battling for several hours, Williams repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire, directing the commandos as they counterattacked and laid down suppressive fire. He continued to face withering enemy fire as he moved the unit’s satellite radio to reestablish communications, moved wounded soldiers to the casualty evacuation point, and loaded them onto medevac helicopters.

Williams is credited with saving numerous lives and preventing his unit from being overrun.

On 31 October, Williams was again honored during his induction into the Pentagon’s Hall of Heroes.

You can read more about this great American on the Army’s Medal of Honor website at <https://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/williams/>. ■

