

Medal of Honor

Capt. Larry L. Taylor

Capt. Larry L. Taylor was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on 18 June 1968 near the village of Ap Go Cong in Binh Dương Province, Republic of Vietnam. Then a first lieutenant, Taylor was a Cobra attack helicopter gunship pilot on a nighttime mission to provide aerial fire support to a four-man long-range reconnaissance patrol (LRRP) team surrounded and taking fire from a much larger Viet Cong Force.

After locating the team, Taylor and his wingman began low-level attack runs on the enemy, taking intense fire. After about forty-five minutes and running low on ammunition and fuel, Taylor reconnoitered the team's intended escape route and concluded that the team would never make it to their evacuation point because of the concentration of enemy forces along the planned route.

Taylor was determined to rescue the beleaguered team. When the plan to rescue the LRRP team with a Huey UH-1 helicopter was canceled due to the threat in the area, Taylor decided to use his own two-man aircraft to conduct the extraction. He instructed his

wingman to expend all remaining ammunition, and he did the same. Then, he used his landing lights to attract the enemy's fire while the LRRP team moved to a second designated extraction point.

Taylor landed his gunship at the extraction site under heavy fire. With the LRRP team sitting on the aircraft's rocket pods and skids, an innovative method that had never been tried, Taylor lifted them out of danger and flew them to safety.

President Joseph Biden presented the Medal of Honor to Taylor on 5 September 2023 at the White House. Taylor originally received the Silver Star for his actions during the LRRP rescue, but the award was later upgraded. Biden remarked, "When duty called, Larry did everything—did everything to answer. And because of that, he rewrote the fate of four families for generations to come. That's valor. That's valor."

During his career, Taylor flew more than two thousand combat missions. In addition to the Medal of Honor, Biden mentioned that Taylor had also received a Silver Star, a Bronze Star, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, and forty-three Air Medals. The president joked, "Thank, God, he's not putting them all on his chest. He'd have trouble standing."

For more on Taylor's award, see the U.S. Army's Medal of Honor website at <https://www.army.mil/medalofhonor/taylor/>. ■



U.S. Army Capt. Larry L. Taylor (Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army)



President Joseph R. Biden Jr. presents the Medal of Honor to former U.S. Army Capt. Larry L. Taylor during a ceremony at the White House in Washington, D.C., 5 September 2023. (Photo by Henry Villarama, U.S. Army)