



Sgt. 1st Class Matthew J. Loheide is pinned with the Silver Star medal April 5, 2013, by Maj. Gen. Leslie C. Smith, commanding general of the 20th Support Command, during a ceremony outside the headquarters of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), at Fort Campbell, Ky. (Photo by Sgt. David Hodge)

Soldier receives Silver Star, re-enlists in the Army

By Master Sgt. Pete Mayes

101st Airborne Division

Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Loheide received the ultimate two-for-one deal from the Army on April 5. At a special ceremony at Fort Campbell, Ky., he was awarded the Silver Star Medal for heroic actions as a platoon leader when he was assigned to the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), during Operation Strong Eagle while deployed to Afghanistan in June 2010.

He also showed his commitment to the Army and his fellow Soldiers by re-enlisting moments after receiving his award.

Loheide, who is assigned to the Warrior Transition Battalion at Fort Campbell as an adaptive reconditioning NCO, told reporters after the ceremony that he was humbled to receive the award.

“I’ve often looked at this as kind of a double-edged sword, and I humbly accept this award knowing not only

what I did, but also what my men did out there,” he said. “I was never afraid of dying out there as much as I was afraid of failing my men. They were my responsibility and it was my job to take care of them.”

Loheide was flanked by former members of his unit, who offered the highest praise for him.

“He took me in as a young junior officer and showed me what right looks like,” said Capt. Douglas Jones, his former platoon leader.

“I am the product of what they forged,” Loheide said.

Loheide suffered a traumatic brain injury during the conflict in the Kunar Valley of Afghanistan, but

was still able to evacuate his other Soldiers to safety despite his own injuries.

“I couldn’t leave my men behind. It’s not in me,” he said.

He said his experiences as a combat veteran are very useful in his current position at the Warrior Transition Battalion.

“From my own experiences, I feel that I can relate to the Soldiers there more than the clinicians can,” he said.

As for re-enlisting, Loheide said that was an easy decision.

“I’ve never left the Army because it’s a part of me,” he said. ■



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