



Staff Sgt. Ty Michael Carter and his wife, Shannon, hold the Medal of Honor flag after being presented with it during his induction ceremony Aug. 27 into the Hall of Heroes at the Pentagon. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Bernardo Fuller)

# NCO, Medal of Honor Recipient Inducted Into Pentagon Hall of Heroes

*By Lisa A. Ferdinando*

Army News Service

**S**taff Sgt. Ty Michael Carter, the most recent Medal of Honor recipient from Operation Enduring Freedom, was inducted into the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes last week just a day after he received the nation's highest military honor.

Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. John F. Campbell said Carter is a reminder to all of America that there are "modern day heroes who live and walk among us."

In attendance at the ceremony were some of the Soldiers who fought alongside Carter during the Oct. 3, 2009, battle in Afghanistan, families of Soldiers who died in that battle, and four Medal of Honor recipients. Also in attendance were senior leaders of the U.S. military, including Under Secretary of the Army Joseph W. Westphal, Ph.D., Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III, and Deputy Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter.

By honoring Carter, Campbell said, the nation is also honoring those who fought alongside him that day at

the remote Combat Outpost Keating. Eight Soldiers died that day in a battle that raged for more than 12 hours.

"He elevated the needs of his team and nation above his own safety," Campbell said of Carter's actions that day. "His great humility, and love for his fellow Soldiers are the hallmark of a true hero."

Carter was among 53 Soldiers at COP Keating, located deep in a valley surrounded by towering mountains in the Kamdesh District, Nuristan Province of Afghanistan. The base was attacked by an estimated 300 Taliban fighters.

The then-specialist sprinted through a "barrage of fire" to resupply ammunition and fight alongside his "desperately outnumbered comrades," Campbell said.

Carter rescued a wounded Soldier, rendered first aid and carried him to safety. He moved through "withering fire" to check on fellow Soldiers and secure a radio that later proved critical to saving the team, Campbell said.

"He fought fiercely and inspired those around him throughout the battle that brutal day of combat," Campbell said. "Sergeant Carter's gallant actions were those of a man, a Soldier, who was physically and mentally strong and well-prepared for combat."

Carter said the brave men of Bravo "Black Knight" Troop 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, "quickly felt the weight of a Taliban force seven-to-eight times our size."

"None of us should have survived," he said. "Though the Taliban have every tactical advantage, what they could never have is the pure untainted sense of brotherhood that the men and women of America's Army feel for their battle buddies."

There is simply no stronger bond than that of a group of Soldiers facing the impossible, Carter said.

"But [we] were determined not to give up, if only to ensure the safety of others. It's stronger than blood," he said.

Carter remembered his fallen comrades and, choking up as he spoke, said one of the biggest regrets of his life was that he could not do more for Spc. Stephan Mace, who he brought to safety but who later died.

Carter said more than half of the Soldiers at COP Keating were wounded and "almost everyone was left with deep, invisible wounds to their hearts and minds."

"These are the unlikely heroes of Combat Outpost Keating, brave men, brothers and Soldiers for life," he said.

Carter, who has been public about his struggle with post-traumatic stress, has a sense of purpose that will drive him to help others who have suffered the wounds of war, Westphal said.

"It takes the same courage that you showed on that day of battle to seek ways to heal," Westphal said. "Leadership, loyalty, character are abundant in you. The love and companionship of your family will strengthen and heal you. Your fellow Soldiers will need you and you will need them."

Family members of the fallen team members were recognized at the event. Campbell read the names of each of those who died in the battle: Staff Sgt. Justin Gallegos, Sgt. Christopher Griffin, Sgt. Joshua Hardt, Sgt. Joshua Kirk, Spc. Stephan Mace, Staff Sgt. Vernon Martin, Sgt. Michael Scusa, and Pfc. Kevin Thomson.

Also remembered at the ceremony was Pvt. Edward Faulkner, who died after returning from Afghanistan "during a difficult struggle with post-traumatic stress," Campbell said.

The 33-year-old Carter, who had his wife, their three children and other family members at the event, was honored at the White House, Aug. 26.

He is the second Soldier to receive the nation's highest military decoration for actions that day at COP Keating. Former Staff Sgt. Clinton Romesha was presented the Medal of Honor on Feb. 11, 2013.

The Pentagon Hall of Heroes is a special room in the Defense Department headquarters that has enshrined all the service members who have received the Medal of Honor.

The hall is "hallowed ground" inside the Pentagon "to memorialize our nation's warriors who have demonstrated conspicuous gallantry above and beyond the call of duty," Campbell said. ■



<https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/NCO-Journal/>

<https://www.facebook.com/NCOJournal>

<https://twitter.com/NCOJournal>

**Disclaimer:** The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the NCO Journal, the U.S. Army, or the Department of Defense.

