



MEDAL OF HONOR
Vietnam War Media Packet



MEDAL OF HONOR
MEDIA KIT

January 2025
Vietnam War honorees



U.S. ARMY

I WILL ALWAYS PLACE THE MISSION FIRST * I WILL NEVER ACCEPT DEFEAT * I WILL NEVER QUIT * I WILL NEVER LEAVE A FALLEN COMRADE



MEDAL OF HONOR

Specialist Fourth Class Kenneth J. David



Hero Biography and Battle Narrative



Hometown: Girard, Ohio

Unit: Company D, 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry,
101st Airborne Division

Entered service: Aug. 27, 1969



Then-Pfc. Kenneth J. David distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty on May 7, 1970, while serving as a radio-telephone operator with Company D, 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry, 101st Airborne Division, near Fire Support Base Maureen, Thua Thien Province, Republic of Vietnam.

On this date, David's company came under an intense attack from a large hostile force. The enemy's ferocious initial assault mortally wounded the company's platoon leader and resulted in numerous other friendly casualties. Upon the initial assault and without hesitation, David handed his radio to his platoon sergeant and moved forward to the defensive perimeter, unleashing a barrage of automatic weapons fire on the enemy. From this location, David bitterly resisted all enemy efforts to overrun his position. Realizing the impact of the enemy assault on the wounded, who were being brought to the center of the perimeter, David – without regard for his own life – moved to a position outside of the perimeter while continuing to engage the enemy.

Each time the enemy attempted to concentrate its fire on the wounded inside the perimeter, David jumped from his position and yelled to draw enemy fire away from his injured comrades and back to himself. Refusing to withdraw in the face of the concentrated enemy fire now directed toward him, he continued to engage the enemy. Although wounded by an exploding satchel charge and running perilously low on ammunition, he tossed hand grenades toward the attackers to effectively counter their fire. The unit's medic, realizing that David had been injured, moved to his position to provide aid, but David assured him that he was okay and continued to fight on.



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Battle Narrative (continued)

David continued to draw enemy fire away from the incoming medevac helicopters, allowing the wounded to be safely evacuated. After allied reinforcements fought their way to his company's position, David carried a wounded comrade to a sheltered position. He then returned to the contact area and continued to engage the enemy and provide covering fire for the wounded until the enemy broke contact and fled, at which point he too was medically evacuated. David's conspicuous gallantry, extraordinary heroism and intrepidity, at the risk of his own life, were above and beyond the call of duty and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.



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1st Battalion, 506th Infantry, 101st Airborne Division

Attached to the 101st Airborne Division in 1943 and formally assigned to it on March 1, 1945, the 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment (“Currahee”), was a core component of the “Screaming Eagles” through World War II, the Vietnam War, Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield, and the Global War on Terrorism.

The 101st Airborne Division was activated on Aug. 16, 1942, at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana. Following its activation and initial training in the United States, the division embarked for the European theater of operations in September 1943, where it continued its training in England.



The Screaming Eagles led the way on D-Day by parachuting into the Cotentin Peninsula in the early morning hours of June 6, 1944, to clear the way for the 4th Infantry Division's landing on Utah Beach. They also spearheaded Operation Market Garden in September, fighting tirelessly for 72 days. In mid-December 1944, they were called upon to counter the massive German offensive through the Ardennes Forest, where they held the critical road junction at Bastogne, Belgium, against impossible odds. As the war came to a victorious conclusion in spring 1945, the 101st Airborne Division liberated the Landsberg concentration camp and captured Hitler's mountaintop retreat in Berchtesgaden, Germany. The end of World War II in Europe relegated the 101st Airborne to occupation duties in Germany, Austria and France. The division was inactivated on Nov. 30, 1945.

The Screaming Eagles experienced an intermittent existence during the immediate postwar period, with several reactivations and inactivations at Camp Breckinridge, Kentucky, and Fort Jackson, South Carolina. Official reactivation ceremonies at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, on Sept. 21, 1956, marked the 101st Airborne Division's return to active duty as the Army's first nuclear-capable Pentomic Division.

In September 1957, some elements of the 101st Airborne Division were ordered to Little Rock, Arkansas, by President Eisenhower. As part of Operation Arkansas, the 1st Airborne Battle Group, 327th Infantry (the Bastogne Bulldogs), escorted the first nine African American students – the “Little Rock Nine” – as they attended classes at Little Rock Central High School. On July 29, 1965, the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, was ordered to the Republic of Vietnam. The remainder of the division remained at Fort Campbell until ordered to Vietnam in late 1967.





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During the enemy's ill-fated Tet Offensive in 1968, the Screaming Eagles were involved in combat operations from Saigon to Quang Tri Province. In August 1968, the Screaming Eagles shed their parachutes in favor of helicopter-borne operations, earning a brand-new designation – the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile). After the Tet Offensive, the division settled into the Thua Thien Province, where they continued offensive operations until being redeployed to the United States in early 1972. The post-Vietnam period was a time of change for the Army and the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile).



Reflecting a shift in structure and orientation, the division was redesignated as the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) on Oct. 4, 1974. In March 1982, elements of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) began six-month deployments to the Sinai Peninsula as members of the Multi-national Force of Observers. In August 1990, the Screaming Eagles deployed to the Middle East in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. During the Liberation of Kuwait, the division fired the first shots of the air war and conducted the longest and largest air assault operations to date, securing Iraqi territory in the Euphrates River Valley. By May 1991, the Screaming Eagles were home.

The 1990s was a busy decade for the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), with numerous deployments to Somalia, Haiti, the Sinai Peninsula, Central and South America, Bosnia and Kosovo in support of stability and support operations. In the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the 3rd Brigade Combat Team deployed to Afghanistan in November 2001. In March 2002 they participated in operations in the Shah-I-Khot Valley that dealt a crippling early blow to the Taliban and al-Qaida. In February and March 2003, the division deployed to Kuwait in anticipation of combat operations against Saddam Hussein's regime. In a grueling air and ground movement of more than 350 miles through hostile territory and intense combat in urban areas, the division exhibited its flexibility, lethality and firepower at every turn. The division redeployed to Fort Campbell in early 2004.

Divisional elements continued to deploy in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, Inherent Resolve, and Freedom's Sentinel in the years that followed, where they participated in many of the Global War on Terrorism's most pivotal moments. The 101st is recognized for its unmatched air assault capability and its ability to execute any combat or contingency mission anywhere in the world, and is still proving its mettle as "tomorrow's division in today's Army."



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