



MEDAL OF HONOR:

Col. Paris D. Davis



Biography



Hometown: Cleveland, Ohio
Unit: 5th Special Forces Group
Military Occupation (MOS): Armor Officer (12A)
Commissioned: June 1959
Deployments: Vietnam War (December 1962 - June 1963) (April 1965 - October 1965)
Thailand (October 1967 - December 1968)



Paris Davis was born on May 13, 1939, in Cleveland, Ohio. As a young man, he became interested in the military and sports, and he pursued both at Southern University, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where he studied political science on an ROTC scholarship.

Davis was commissioned as an Army reserve armor officer in 1959, graduated from Airborne and Ranger schools in 1960, and was selected for the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, serving first in Korea and then Vietnam.

Davis first deployed to Vietnam in 1962 and again in 1965, where he was promoted to captain as a detachment commander with the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, making him one of the first African American Special Forces officers as the civil rights movement gained momentum at home.

In Binh Định province, Davis and his men were tasked with training a force of local volunteers. On June 18, 1965, he commanded a team of inexperienced South Vietnamese, along with Special Forces Soldiers, against a superior enemy force. Over the course of two days, Davis selflessly led a charge to neutralize enemy emplacements, called for precision artillery fire, engaged in hand-to-hand combat with the enemy, and prevented the capture of three American soldiers (Robert Brown, John Reinberg, and Billy Waugh) while saving their lives with a medical extraction. Davis sustained multiple gunshot and grenade-fragment wounds during the 19-hour battle and refused to leave the battlefield until his men were safely removed.

For these heroic acts during his second tour in Vietnam, Davis received the Silver Star, the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device, a Purple Heart with one Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Air Medal with "V" device. He was also awarded the Soldiers Medal for heroism when he saved the life of a Soldier, a driver who was stuck in an overturned and burning fuel truck. Davis pulled the Soldier from the truck just before it exploded. Davis is one of only four service members in U.S. military history to receive both the Soldier's Medal and the Medal of Honor.

Davis attended Command and General Staff College in 1971 and the Naval War College in 1980. He served with the Army staff, the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Headquarters, U.S. Army European Command.

Davis assumed command of the 10th Special Forces Group, Fort Devens, Massachusetts, and was promoted to colonel in 1981. Davis retired from the Army on July 30, 1985. He holds a master's degree in public affairs from Southern Illinois University, and a Ph.D. in public administration from Northern Virginia University. In 2019, he was inducted into the U.S. Army Ranger Hall of Fame.

Davis is a proud father of three children. Following his military career, Davis published the Metro Herald newspaper for 30 years in Alexandria, Virginia, where he now lives.





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Battle Narrative

Then-Capt. Paris D. Davis distinguished himself through conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as commander of an Alpha Detachment, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, in the vicinity of Bong Son, Republic of Vietnam, June 17-18, 1965.

Davis, along with three American Special Forces personnel, led an inexperienced company of the 883rd South Vietnamese Regional Force during an attack against an enemy base.

On the evening of June 17, 1965, Davis personally captured two enemy personnel for questioning. From them, he learned that a vastly larger enemy force was operating in the area. That night, Davis guided his Soldiers into attack positions and at dawn he led his company into battle.

Davis was wounded leading the initial assault, but continued moving forward, personally engaging the enemy in hand-to-hand combat and killing several enemy soldiers. The enemy counterattacked and separated Davis from his troops. Davis then led four others forward and, while braving intense fire, managed to destroy gun emplacements and capture several enemy soldiers.

Davis moved to regroup his forces and break contact with the enemy. As he called for air and artillery fire, the enemy again counterattacked, and Davis was struck by automatic weapons fire. He was wounded once again after an enemy soldier engaged him at close range with his rifle, but Davis tackled the enemy and defeated him in hand-to-hand combat. Davis then saw two American Soldiers were seriously wounded and in need of rescue from hostile fire.

Davis made it to the first Soldier under a hail of enemy fire and was shot once again. Despite his grievous wounds and with no regard for his own safety, Davis saved the Soldier and returned him to the company's perimeter.

Davis again broke cover, braving enemy fire, to retrieve the second Soldier. Crawling nearly 150 yards and wounded by enemy grenade fragments, he rescued the Soldier and returned him to the company perimeter.

Davis then directed the helicopter extraction of his wounded troops while refusing medical evacuation for himself. Instead, he directed tactical air and artillery fire, ensuring the destruction of the enemy force.

Davis' selfless actions and personal courage were decisive in changing the tide of the battle, ensuring that American Soldiers were not killed or taken prisoner, preventing the South Vietnamese company from being overrun, and ensuring the defeat of a numerically superior enemy force.

His extraordinary heroism and selflessness beyond the call of duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.





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Unit History

The 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) derives its lineage from the 1st Special Service Force, a combined Canadian-American regiment that was constituted during World War II on July 5, 1942, in the U.S. Army as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 1st Battalion, 3rd Regiment, 1st Special Service Force. The unit participated in the Italian Campaign and in Southern France before being inactivated on Feb. 6, 1945.

In April 1960, the 5th SFG (A) was constituted in the regular Army and designated Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 5th SFG (A), 1st Special Forces. It was officially activated at Fort Bragg, North Carolina on Sept. 21, 1961.

In 1962 elements of the 5th SFG (A) began serving temporary tours of duty in the Republic of South Vietnam, and the group was fully deployed by February 1965. From its operational base at Nha Trang, the group deployed throughout the four military regions in South Vietnam. Its operational detachments established and manned camps at 270 locations, where they trained and led indigenous forces of the Civilian Irregular Defense Groups. Additionally, Soldiers from the group led units of indigenous forces conducting reconnaissance and direct-action missions throughout Southeast Asia.

Although one of the smallest units engaged in Vietnam, the group colors fly 14 campaign streamers from that conflict, and its Soldiers are among the most decorated Soldiers in the history of our nation. Multiple Medals of Honor were awarded to Soldiers of the 5th SFG (A), and the group was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation, two Valorous Unit Citations, the Meritorious Unit Commendation, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry (with palm) and the Republic of Vietnam Civil Action Honor Medal, First Class.

The 5th SFG (A) added to its rich history of combat operations during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait; extensive security and humanitarian missions in Somalia; support operations in Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo; unconventional warfare after September 11, 2001, which toppled the popular base of the Taliban government and the terrorist-sponsoring state of Afghanistan in just six months; the defeat of Saddam Hussein's regime during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003; Operation New Dawn in 2011; thousands of successful operations targeting terrorist and insurgent networks through the training and development of Iraqi forces; and building skills and capabilities with multiple partner nation security forces across the U.S. Central Command area of operations.

As Soldiers of the group continue to serve on battlefields around the world, they uphold the highest of standards as paragons of the Special Forces motto: "De Oppresso Liber," which means "to free the oppressed."





MEDAL OF HONOR: Family, Friends, and Leaders



Regan Davis Hopper Biography

Regan Davis Hopper was born in 1968, the third child of Col. Paris Davis. Regan enjoyed growing up on military bases in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Stuttgart, Germany, and off base in Virginia. She attended George Mason University, where she earned a political science degree (like her dad). Regan pursued a career in media, including interning for her dad's newspaper. She served as the press secretary for Michael Steele, the first African American Lt. Governor of Maryland. Regan currently works in internal communications at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. There she created SPIRIT, a virtual platform to foster employees' allegiance to each other and their mission.



Ron Deis Biography

Ron Deis joined the Army in March 1963. His military experience includes basic training at Fort Knox, Kentucky, advanced infantry training at Fort Polk, Louisiana, Airborne School at Fort Benning, Georgia, Special Forces training (demolitions) at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Berlitz School of Language in Washington D.C., First Special Forces group in Okinawa, Japan, and service in Vietnam. He was discharged from active duty in March 1966.

Ron graduated from Ohio State University in 1973, using the G.I. Bill, to earn a degree in medical radiography. He taught at Ohio State University and Idaho State University and managed hospital radiology departments in hospitals. He started a medical radiography program at the University of Alaska Anchorage. He served for 18 years as director of medical imaging at the Alaska Native Medical Center and later ran the statewide teleradiology system part-time for the South Central Foundation. He fully retired in April 2022.





MEDAL OF HONOR:

Maj. Gen. Patrick Roberson - Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Army Special Operations Command



Hometown: Sauk Centre, Minnesota
Unit: U.S. Army Special Operations Command
Military Occupation (MOS): Special Forces (18A)
Commissioned: May 1990
Deployments: Inherent Resolve, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Bosnia, and others.



Maj. Gen. Patrick B. Roberson serves as the deputy commander of the United States Army Special Operations Command. Roberson commissioned in the United States Army in 1990 as an infantry officer. Afterwards, he successfully completed Special Forces Assessment and Selection in 1996.

He previously served as the commander and commandant of the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he oversaw the assessment and training of all Army Special Operations Soldiers, commanders, Special Operations Joint Task Force-Operation Iraqi Resolve, deputy chief of staff, U.S. Army Reserve Command, and deputy commanding general-operations, 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne), where he also served as deputy commanding general, Special Operations Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve. Roberson also served in the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), the same command that Col. Retired Paris Davis commanded.

Roberson is a graduate of Mankato State University and the Naval Postgraduate School.





MEDAL OF HONOR:



Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Weimer, Command Sergeant Major, U.S. Special Operations Command



Hometown: Ft. Belvoir, Virginia
Unit: U.S. Special Operations Command
Military Occupation (MOS): Special Forces (18Z)
Deployments: Inherent Resolve, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, New Dawn and others.



Command Sgt. Maj. Michael R. Weimer is an Army Special Forces operator who serves as the command senior enlisted leader of U.S. Army Special Operations Command. Weimer joined the Army in 1993 and successfully completed Special Forces Assessment and Selection in 1994. He completed the Special Forces Weapons Sergeant Course and earned his Green Beret in 1996.

His previous assignments include tours with 7th Special Forces Group, and 19 years serving within U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) including as USASOC's operations (G3) sergeant major. He served numerous tours in the U.S. Central and U.S. Southern Command's area of responsibility and other global missions. Weimer is a graduate of Norwich University earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Strategic Studies and Defense Analysis.





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