



MEDAL OF HONOR:

Staff Sgt. Edward N. Kaneshiro



Biography



Hometown: Honolulu, Hawaii
Unit: 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division
Military Occupation (MOS): Infantryman (11B)
Enlisted: April 1959
Deployments: Vietnam War (1966)



Edward Kaneshiro was born in Honolulu, Oahu, Territory of Hawaii in 1928. The eighth child of 16 siblings, he resided in Hawaii and grew up working on the family farm. Kaneshiro graduated from Leilehua High School in June 1946, then worked for several civilian employers until his enlistment in the Army on April 2, 1959. Upon completion of advanced individual training as an infantryman, he was assigned to Company C, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii. He served in non-combat overseas tours in Okinawa, Japan and South Korea, and was then assigned Troop C, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division. He deployed to Vietnam as a squad leader within his platoon.

During a mission in Kim Son Valley, Vietnam, in December 1966, his unit came under fire from North Vietnamese troops. Kaneshiro crawled forward to attack, using six grenades and an M16 rifle. This brave and selfless act not only saved the lives of U.S. Soldiers, but also resulted in success for the next mission of the Army forces. Kaneshiro was later killed in action on March 6, 1967, as a result of a hostile gunshot wound.

Kaneshiro left behind his wife Mitsuko and their five children. She began a life of tremendous difficulty raising five children alone, the oldest daughter at 10 and the youngest son at only four months. Mitsuko passed away on April 10, 2022, at the age of 90.





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Battle Narrative

Staff Sgt. Edward N. Kaneshiro distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while serving as an infantry squad leader with Troop C, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, near Phu Huu 2, Kim Son Valley, Republic of Vietnam, on Dec. 1, 1966.

Not knowing that the village was heavily fortified with a fully bunkered, concealed trench system and garrisoned by North Vietnamese troops in vastly superior force, two squads of the platoon had deployed to its center, while Kaneshiro and his squad scouted the more open terrain to the east of the village.

Sensing the opportunity to ambush the infantry squads, the entrenched enemy force erupted with machine gun and small-arms fire against the two squads at the center of the village, killing the platoon leader and the point man, wounding four others, and successfully suppressing the surviving Soldiers.

Kaneshiro moved with his men to the sounds of the fire. Swiftly reading the situation, and seeing that fire from the big trench had to be stopped if anyone was to survive, he first deployed his men to cover, then crawled forward to attack the enemy force alone. He began by throwing grenades from the parapet while flattened to the ground, successfully throwing the first grenade through the aperture of the bunker, eliminating the machine gunner who had opened the action.

That done, with five grenades remaining and his rifle to sustain his assault, Kaneshiro jumped into the trench to sweep its length where it fronted the two pinned squads. Over a distance of about 35 meters, he worked the ditch alone, destroying one enemy group with rifle fire and two others with grenades.

Kaneshiro's actions enabled the orderly extrication and reorganization of the platoon, which was the beginning of a larger action that ultimately led to a successful withdrawal from the village. His conspicuous gallantry and uncommon heroism under fire were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.

