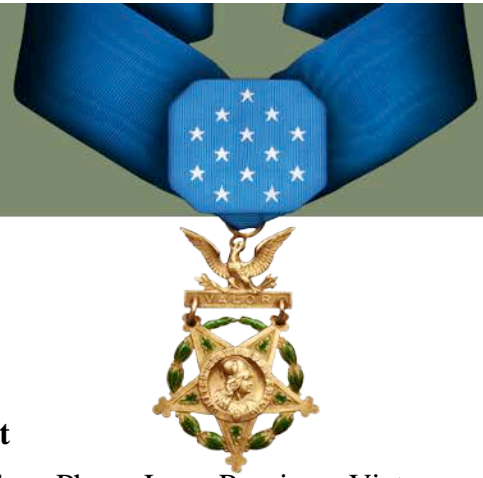




Master Sergeant Jose Rodela  
**MEDAL OF HONOR**  
VIETNAM WAR



LIVING RECIPIENT

**Living Recipient**

**Location of Action:** Phuoc Long Province, Vietnam

**Date of Action:** September 1, 1969

**Service Dates:** September 1955 – 1975

**Hometown:** Corpus Christi, Texas

Medal of Honor recipient Master Sgt. Jose Rodela was born in Corpus Christi, Texas, June 15, 1937.

Then-Sgt. 1st Class Jose Rodela is being recognized for his valorous actions on Sept. 1, 1969, while serving as the company commander with 3rd Battalion, 3rd Mobile Strike Force Command in Phuoc Long Province, Vietnam. On Sept. 1, 1969, the 3rd Battalion had the mission of moving in support of the 1st Battalion, 3rd Mobile Strike Force, which had suffered heavy casualties as a result of enemy contacts in Phuoc Long Province. While enroute to the intended objective; the 3rd Battalion came under extremely heavy 81mm mortar, rocket, light and heavy machine-gun, and small arms fire, from an unknown sized enemy unit. The initial volume of fire placed on the 3rd Battalion was so vicious that the battalion suffered 42 casualties almost immediately. Because of the intensity of the enemy fire and the numerous casualties, a critical state of confusion was present and the battalion was on the brink of panic. Rodela's company was located to the battalion's east flank and received the largest concentration of the enemy's fire during the initial attack. Rodela disregarded the withering enemy fire, immediately began to move from man to man in his company, physically pushing them into defensive positions to form a half moon perimeter. His clear thinking and quick action prevented much heavier casualties in his company and relieved the pressure of the remainder of the battalion, providing time to organize a defensive perimeter. His entire company was hidden by dust, smoke, and exploding enemy mortar and rocket rounds. It was later determined that his company suffered 33 wounded and 11 killed in action. As the fire slackened, Rodela suddenly jumped up. He was the only member of his company who was moving and he began to run from one position to the next checking for casualties and moving survivors into different positions in an attempt to form a stable defensive line. Throughout the battle, in spite of his wounds, Rodela repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire to attend to the fallen and eliminate an enemy rocket position.

Rodela retired from the Army in 1975.