



Medal of Honor Brothers



Medal of Honor COL Paris Davis



Captain Paris D. Davis, Commander, Detachment A-321, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while serving as an advisor to the 883rd Regional Force Company, Army of the Republic of Vietnam, during combat operations against an armed enemy in the vicinity of Bồng Sơn, Republic of Vietnam on June 17-18 1965. Captain Davis consistently exposed himself to the hostile armed small arms fire to rally the inexperienced and disorganized company. He expertly directed both artillery and small arms fire, enabling other elements of the company to reach his position. Captain Davis saved multiple wounded men in his company. He refused medical evacuation himself. Following the arrival of air support, Captain Davis directed artillery fire within 30 meters of his own position in an attempt to halt the enemy's advance. Captain Davis directed the helicopter extraction of his wounded colleague not leaving the battlefield himself until after all friend- –friendly forces were recovered or medically evacuated. Captain Davis's heroism and selflessness above and beyond the call of duty, at the risk of his own life, are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. **Colonel Davis Commanded the 10th Special Forces Group in the early 80's being the first Black Officer to Command a Special Forces Group.**



Medal of Honor SFC Eugene Ashley



Sergeant First Class Eugene Ashley was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for actions in trying to relieve members of A-Camp Lang Vei in 6-7 February 1968. Camp Lang Vei was an A-Camp manned by Special Forces Detachment A-101 near Khe Sanh. The camp was overrun with a combination of NVA troops and PT-76 Tanks starting the morning of 6 February leading into 7 February. This was the first time Tanks had been successfully used by the NVA in the war. SFC Ashley was part of the Mike Force Company sent to relieve the defenders of the camp. SFC Ashley led four assaults and on his fifth try he was wounded by machine gun fire. He was subsequently killed by mortar fire that landed near him. Because of his valiant efforts he provided the needed space for some of the defenders to escape from their predicament. In all 7 NVA tanks were destroyed, an estimated 90 NVA soldiers were killed with 7 tanks destroyed and 7 Americans killed with 3 captured.



Medal of Honor

SFC William M. Bryant



Sergeant First Class William M. Bryant was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for actions in leading his Mike Force indigenous troops during an intense attack by NVA forces. SFC Bryant was the Commanding Officer of his 3d Mobile Strike Force Company (Mike Force) when on 24 March 1969 his battalion came under heavy fire and became surrounded by 3 enemy regiments. SFC Bryant displayed extraordinary heroism throughout 34 hours of constant attacks as he moved throughout his company's position heedless of the intense hostile fire. With complete disregard for his safety, SFC Bryant ran through enemy fire to retrieve and distribute ammunition to his men. During a lull in the fighting, he led several patrols outside of his perimeter to obtain information about the enemy force attacking and eventually led a patrol in a daring attempt to break through the enemy encirclement. SFC Bryant was seriously wounded from intense automatic weapons fire however, despite this SFC Bryant fearlessly charged an enemy machinegun position. By doing this action SFC Bryant overran the position and single-handedly destroyed the 3-man position. SFC Bryant's men were inspired by this and renewed their attack on the entrenched enemy. During this time while regrouping his men for a final assault SFC Bryant was mortally wounded by a enemy rocket.



Medal of Honor SFC (ret) Melvin Morris



SFC Melvin Morris received the Medal of Honor for various actions on September 17, 1969 while commanding the Third Company, Third Battalion of the IV Mobile Strike Force (Mike Force) near Chi Lang, South Vietnam. Then- Staff Sergeant Morris led an advance across enemy lines to recover the body of a fallen teammate. SSG Morris single-handedly destroyed with a bag of grenades an enemy force in a series of bunkers which was pinning down his battalion.⁵⁰ SSG Morris was shot three times during the engagement.⁵¹ SFC Morris didn't receive the award until March 18, 2014, from President Barack Obama in a ceremony in the White House. The award was approved because of a Defense Authorization Act, which called for a congressionally mandated review of minority veterans from World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War to ensure that no prejudice was shown to those deserving the Medal of Honor.



Distinguished Service Cross Brothers



Distinguished Service Cross

LT Willie Merkerson



First Lieutenant Merkerson distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions as senior Special Forces advisor to a Vietnamese task force conducting a search and destroy mission in Binh Dinh Province. Lieutenant Merkerson repeatedly exposed himself to intense enemy fire and led the two-company force against two North Vietnamese Army battalions. His unit was brought under heavy machine gun and mortar fire, and he moved along his lines, shouting encouragement, rallying the troops, and personally firing machine guns, mortars and grenade launchers. He fearlessly led an attack through the encirclement of the enemy and, under intense sniper fire, set up an evacuation and treatment center for his wounded troops. While rendering first aid to the wounded, he received word that one of his companies was trapped and a fellow advisor had been wounded. He refused airstrikes in the area and proceeded through 250 meters of enemy infested jungle before finding the wounded sergeant. He carried his comrade through intense machine gun and sniper fire to the evacuation area. While in the evacuation area, Lieutenant Merkerson directed air strikes on the enemy positions and called in a Medevac helicopter. He again exposed himself to enemy fire while going back and forth to the helicopter carrying the eleven wounded and five dead soldiers. His fearless leadership and sacrifice turned a possible disaster into a decisive victory. Lieutenant Merkerson's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. **Willie Merkerson is a Distinguished Member of the Regiment.**



Distinguished Service Cross CSM (ret) Tyrone Adderly



CSM(ret) Tyrone Adderly received the Distinguished Service Cross for his gallantry as a member of the Son Tay Raid rescue force that executed a daring raid on a North Vietnamese prison in November 1970. This raid was an attempt to rescue captured American prisoners of war held in North Viet Nam. For their efforts the Raiders received Silver Stars except COL Bull Simons, the Element Leaders of CPT Dick Meadows and CPT Elliot Sydnor, and SFC Tryone Adderly received the Distinguished Service Cross. The legacy of what they did is still studied til this day and is the standard as to how to plan, coordinate, and execute a complex raid in a denied area. CSM(ret) Adderly is a Distinguished Member of the Regiment.



Silver Star Brothers



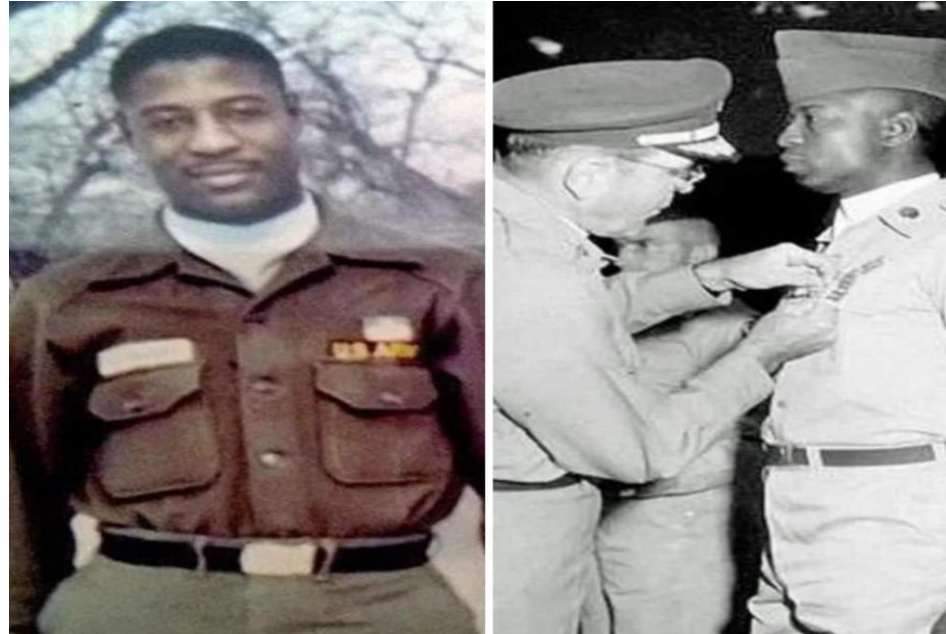
Silver Star SFC (ret) Mel Hill



The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 8, 1918 (amended by act of July 25, 1963), takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star to Sergeant First Class Melvin Hill, United States Army, for gallantry in action on 28 November 1970, while serving as Team Leader of a Combined Reconnaissance Team, Republic of Vietnam. At 0200 hours Sergeant Hill fearlessly led his team from the tail gate of a C-130 aircraft at an altitude of 17,000 feet on the first free fall into hostile territory in the history of the United States Army. This awesome free fall carried him through two cloud layers and light rain to penetrate deep in the enemy's rear area. The team landed in rugged terrain, but, due to the intensive training and rehearsal conducted by Sergeant Hill, sustained no injuries. Having cached their parachutes, the team moved through the high-threat area toward their target to accomplish their reconnaissance mission. During their five-day stay behind enemy lines, the team gathered sufficient hard intelligence to mark this mission a success. As a result of Sergeant Hill's training, motivation and fearless leadership, his team was able to accomplish a harrowing mission which testifies to his courage and moral fiber. Sergeant First Class Hill's conspicuous gallantry in action was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Army and reflects great credit upon himself and the military service.

Silver Star

MSG Ernest Hayward



MSG Ernest Hayward served as a Special Forces qualified Operations and Intelligence Specialist. He was assigned to Det A-332, 5th SFG(A). MSG Hayward was fatally wounded on October 25, 1965 in the Binh Long province of South Viet Nam. He was 37 years old. Ernest received many letters of achievement, including one from the President of the United States, served as a special guard to his late Commander-In-Chief, President John F. Kennedy, during the State mourning and funeral for the deceased President, and was twice invited to the White House. MSG Hayward received both the Silver Star and the Purple Heart Medals, MSG Hayward is honored on the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington DC on Panel 02E, Line 134. MSG lies in rest at Arlington National Cemetery. Lest We Forget....

Silver Star

SGM (ret) Stephan Johns



CSM (R) Stephan D. Johns, earned the Silver Star for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving as a Special Forces Sniper on Operational Detachment Alpha 334 (ODA-334), during combat operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. On 30 May 2004, CSM (R) Stephan Johns distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous action during an assault against an Al Qaeda stronghold in Kabiri Kalay, Ghazni Province Afghanistan. CSM (R) Johns was in the last helicopter of a group mounting an assault on Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters in a valley in northeast Afghanistan. His job was to shoot at the enemy from the air to provide cover to ground forces. When his helicopter was hit and briefly forced down, CSM (R) Johns jumped out to set up a one-man defensive wall between a group of enemy fighters and the main American assault group. Alone on the ground for 30 minutes before being picked up by another helicopter, he killed nine enemy fighters who repeatedly rushed him. CSM (R) Johns valorous actions were recognized and recommended for an upgrade to the Distinguished Service Cross by the Deputy Commander of SOCOM Rear Admiral Eric Olsen. Hopefully, CSM (R) Johns award will be relooked at and upgraded to the Distinguished Service Cross as was recommended.

Silver Star

MSG (ret) Anthony M. Siriwardene



MSG (ret) Anthony M. Siriwardene, heroically distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous conduct in the face of the enemy of the US as the Engineer Sergeant, Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA) 316, Special Operations Task Force - 31, Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) from 7 August 2005 to 9 August 2005. Sergeant Siriwardene distinguished himself in seven fierce enemy engagements with a well trained and aggressive enemy, during a time span of 56 hours, while operating as the driver of the first vehicle of the element. While conducting operations in Zabol Province, Afghanistan, Sergeant Siriwardene's calm manner and tactical competence under fire were imperative to the detachment's survival.

OUR LEGACY GROUP



Trailblazers



OUR LEGACY GROUP





Trailblazers

CPT (ret) Chalmer Archer

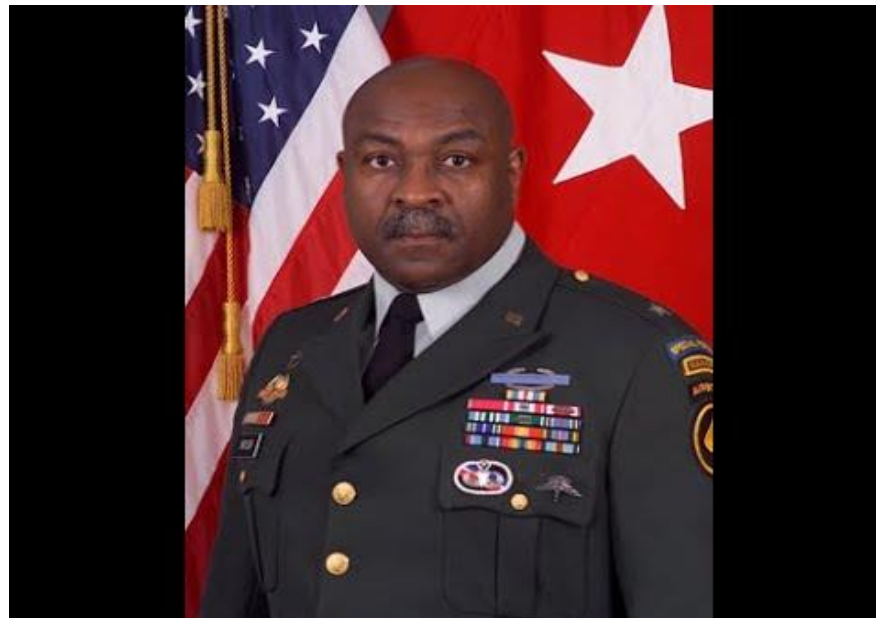


CPT (ret) Chalmers Archer is believed to be one of the first Blacks to attend Special Forces Training in 1952. In 1957 while assigned as a SF Medic to the 14th Special Forces Detachment of the 77th SFG, SGT Archers deployed to Okinawa. His detachment became the nucleus of the 1st Special Forces Group that officially stood up in 1957. His Detachment was training in Viet Nam when his CPT, CPT Hank Cramer died in a training accident making him the first soldier killed in Viet Nam.



Trailblazers

BG(ret) Remo Butler



Brigadier General (Ret) Remo Butler was born November 16, 1951 in Egypt, Mississippi. He was commissioned second lieutenant in 1974 with the U.S. Army upon his graduation from Austin Peay State University. His army career lasted for 29 years, culminating as a Brigadier General. General Butler spent the majority of his military career in the U.S. Army Special Forces. He commanded at every level, including Commander of Special Operations Command (SOC) South. In addition, he commanded the 1st Special Warfare Training Group in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. His last military assignment was from July 2003 to July 2004 as Chief of Staff for the U.S. Special Operations Command at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. Among many of his accomplishments was the honor of being the first Black Special Forces General.



Trailblazers

LTG Antonio Fletcher



LTG Fletcher is currently the highest ranking Black Special Forces Officer. No other Black SF Officer has reached the rank he currently holds. Lieutenant General Fletcher began his career in the 197th Infantry Brigade at Fort Benning, Georgia, and has led Soldiers and Joint teammates in Infantry and Special Operations units in the United States, South America, Iraq, and Afghanistan. A career Special Forces officer, he has commanded at the Detachment, Company, Battalion, and Group levels, including command of 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne). As a General Officer, his assignments include Deputy Commander of Special Operations Joint Task Force-Afghanistan from 2016-2017, Assistant Commanding General for Support, 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne) in 2017, Director of Strategy, Policy, and Plans (J5) at United States Southern Command from 2017-2018, and Commander of Special Operations Command South from 2018-2020. Lieutenant General Fletcher was born in South Carolina and graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, in 1989. He holds a Bachelor's of Science degree from West Point and a Master's Degree in Strategic Studies from the Marine Corps War College.



Trailblazers

CSM (ret) Joseph Dennison



Command Sergeant Major Joseph Dennison was **the first Black Command Sergeant Major of a Group**. CSM was the 5th SFG(A) CSM during the Groups move to Fort Campbell Kentucky in 1988. CSM Dennison returned to Fort Bragg and assumed the position of CSM 1st Special Operations Command which became the United States Army Special Forces Command. CSM Dennison culminated his military career as the Command Sergeant Major, Special Operations Command Central during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. **CSM (ret) Dennison is a Distinguished Member of the Regiment.**



Trailblazers

CW4 (ret) Charlie Simmons



CW4 (ret) Charlie “Black Frog” Simmons was the first Black SF Soldier to attend the Special Forces Warrant Officer Course in 1984.



Trailblazers

SGM (ret) Willie D. Washington



SGM (ret) Willie D. Washington was **the first Black SF soldier to graduate the Special Forces Underwater Operations Course (SCUBA School) in 1970.** SGM Washington also distinguished himself as a W9er, the designated code as being both a Combat Diver and a Military Freefall (HALO) qualified soldier, and being a Team Sergeant for a specialty Green Light ODA. He is also a graduate of the SF Recon Course, SF MFF Ram Air School, Ranger school, Jumpmaster school, TOW Instructor Course, and the Sergeants Major Academy. His awards include the Silver Star and Bronze Star with "V" device.



Trailblazers

CW5 (ret) John Wade



CW5 (ret) John Wade enlisted in the Army on 14 July 1981. Groups/Units he served at were 7th, 1st, SOTD-JRTC, JIATF-W, SOCKOR and USAJFKSWCS. He was the first Black SF Soldier to be promoted to CW5 and the first CW5 to become the CCWO for SOCKOR. He Honorably retired on 1 Oct 2017 after 36 years of service. His last assignment was the CCWO for 1st SWTG(A) at Ft. Bragg, NC.



Trailblazers

SFC (ret) Mel Hill



Sergeant First Class Mel Hill was the team member assigned to RECON Team ASP, Command Central North in the covert unit MACVSOG. SFC Hill was the became **the Team Leader for the world's first combat High Altitude Low Opening (HALO) jump** into Laos in 1967 while serving in MACVSOG. SFC Hill's team was tasked to conduct a HALO infil into the country of Laos with the SGM Billy Waugh as the Team Leader. SGM Waugh was injured on the train up for the mission and by default SFC Hill became the Team Leader for the now three-man Recon Team. The team jumped at 18,000 feet AGL and even though they did not land together and link up, they were able to stay on the ground for 3 days and were successfully exfiltrated out of enemy territory back to friendly lines. The team performed the world's first combat HALO mission proving that this was a viable tactical infil concept still used to this day by the worlds Special Operation Forces.



Trailblazers

COL (ret) Earl Atkinson



COL Earl Atkinson was drafted as a Private and rose through the ranks to Staff Sergeant when he transitioned to the Officer Corps by going through the Officer Candidate School (OCS). COL Atkinson was the **first Black Special Forces Soldier to pass Selection and Assessment and graduate from the Operators Training Course for the 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta (1st SFOD-D)**. In his long and distinguished career some of his highlights include: ODA Detachment XO 1/5TH SFG, Troop CDR 1st SFOD-D, S3 1/75th Ranger Bn, Battalion Commander for 3/7th SFG, and Deputy Director for Antiterrorism Office for the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations for Low Intensity Conflict



Trailblazers

SGM (ret) Alsee Richardson



SGM Alsee Richardson was the first Black Soldier to graduate from the Golden Knights Assessment and Selection program and became a member of the U S Army Parachute Team in 1970. After his graduation, he moved on to become the team leader of the Gold Demonstration team from 1971-1977. Richardson was an accomplished Soldier that earned his Special Forces and Ranger tabs and was awarded the Bronze Star and Vietnam Service ribbon. While assigned to the team, he conducted more than 1500 free-fall jumps and participated in more that 300 demonstrations around the world. Richardson is a true trailblazing Golden Knight!