

# Enlisted Hero Walk Lackland AFB



## **Staff Sergeant Robert Gutierrez Jr.**



*Air Force Cross*

*Afghanistan*

On 5 October 2009, Staff Sergeant Gutierrez was assigned as the combat controller of the 21<sup>st</sup> Special Tactics Squadron, to an Army Special Forces detachment. Sergeant Gutierrez and his team conducted a high-risk nighttime raid to capture the number two Taliban leader in the region. During the initial assault, the team was attacked with a barrage of rifle and heavy machine-gun fire from a numerically superior enemy force resulting in Sergeant Gutierrez receiving a shot in the chest, and the team leader receiving a shot in the leg. While wounded and under fire, Sergeant Gutierrez returned fire, engaging the enemy and brought airpower to bear, controlling three “danger close” A-10 strafing runs with exceptional precision. After the first A-10 attack, the team medic performed a needle decompression to re-inflate Sergeant Gutierrez’s collapsed lung. The following two A-10 attacks decimated the enemy forces, allowing the team to escape the kill zone without any additional casualties.