

Enlisted Hero Walk Lackland AFB



Technical Sergeant Andrew I. Martin



Silver Star

Operation Enduring Freedom

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress July 9, 1918 (amended by an act of July 25, 1963), takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star to Technical Sergeant Andrew I. Martin, United States Air Force, for gallantry in connection with military operations against an armed enemy of the United States while serving with the 23d Special Tactics Squadron near Shahi Kot, Eastern Afghanistan, in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, from 27 February 2002 to 4 March 2002. During this period, while attached to an elite Navy Sea, Air, and Land (SEAL) Team as the sole Special Tactics Combat Control Operator, he performed all radio communications, tactical reconnaissance, and close air support responsibilities during Operation ANACONDA against Al Qaeda forces in the rugged mountains of Eastern Afghanistan. Sergeant Martin was a key member of a five-man sniper team during this sustained special operation that located and identified countless and previously unseen enemy fortifications, ground patrols, and fighting positions throughout the Shahi Kot Valley region of

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Afghanistan. His elite team achieved overwhelming operational effects on the battlefield completely out of proportion to its small size. He scaled an eleven thousand foot peak carrying over one hundred pounds of equipment, traversing over nineteen kilometers of the most precipitous landscape the continent has to offer. Approaching the target area he spotted a large-caliber automatic weapons position manned by four enemy personnel. Under an incoming hail of enemy fire, his team assaulted the fortified position eliminating two enemy fighters with surgical rifle fire. Anticipating enemy contact, Sergeant Martin pre-briefed the AC-130 gunship with a fire mission and within seconds had eliminated the remaining enemy force. From his newly conquered dominating land feature, Sergeant Martin called in a storm of close air support fire on a multitude of targets staged in offensive positions overlooking the alley below. In a second enemy fire fight engagement Sergeant Martin was credited with five confirmed kills during an hour-long battle supporting a friendly force under attack. Sergeant Martin faced death from torturous terrain, the debilitating effects of high altitude exposure and extreme cold weather, he survived two direct mortar attacks, and successfully executed two armed assaults of Al Qaeda positions, killing the enemy at close range. The strategic significance of the devastation Sergeant Martin delivered upon the enemy is beyond assessment. By conservative estimates his team killed between thirty to fifty enemy fighters. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Sergeant Martin has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.