

## Navy Cross Citation for Scott C. Montoya

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the NAVY CROSS to

Sergeant  
Scott C. Montoya  
United States Marine Corps Reserve

for service as set forth in the following

### CITATION:

For extraordinary heroism as a Scout Sniper, Scout Sniper Platoon, 2d Battalion, 23d Marines, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM on 8 April 2003. During the battle for Baghdad, Sergeant Montoya's sniper team arrived within Company F's position as they came under heavy small arms fire from a determined enemy force. He immediately encouraged Marines to deploy and return fire. Noticing a disabled civilian vehicle on the road in the line of fire and with complete disregard for his own life, he rushed forward amidst a hail of gunfire and dragged a wounded Iraqi civilian to safety. Observing a wounded Marine struggling to get off the same fire swept street, he risked his life to lead the Marine to safety. Returning to the front, he spotted a wounded Marine lying in the street. Ignoring the hailstorm of bullets, Sergeant Montoya rushed into the street for a third time to carry the injured Marine to safety. Sergeant Montoya returned a fourth time to evacuate an unconscious Marine. Returning to the front again, he dashed into the contested street and assisted a Marine who had been dazed by an explosion. Sergeant Montoya ensured medical attention was administered and verified that evacuations were ongoing. By his outstanding display of decisive leadership, unlimited courage in the face of heavy enemy fire, and utmost devotion to duty, Sergeant Montoya reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

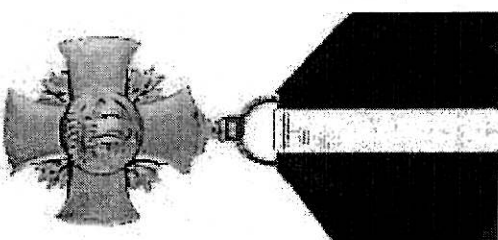
For the President

Secretary of the Navy.

## THE HISTORY OF THE NAVY CROSS

*For extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force.*

Authorized February 4, 1919, the Navy Cross was the Navy's 3rd highest award for combat heroism and other distinguished services. On August 7, 1942 Congress made the Navy Cross a combat only decoration with precedence over the Distinguished Service Medal, making it the Navy's 2nd highest award ranking below only the Medal of Honor. It shares its position with the Army's Distinguished Service Cross and the Air Force Cross.



## 2D BATTALION, 23D MARINES UNIT HISTORY

The 1991 Gulf War saw the activation of a large number of Marine Corps Reserve units. 2/23 was mobilized on 8 December 1990 and deployed Christmas Eve for service with the 3d Marine Division in Okinawa, Japan. The unit remained mobilized until 8 August 1991. Returning home to its present day sites in Encino, Port Hueneme, Los Alamitos, and San Bruno, California; Las Vegas, Nevada, and Salt Lake City, Utah, the Battalion continued its legacy of performance by winning the General Harry Schmidt Trophy for excellence in a battalion-sized combat unit in 1991 and 1993. In 2000, Weapons Company won the General A. Maas award for the most outstanding 4th Marine Division unit.

After the terrorist attacks on 11 September 2001, 2/23 was again mobilized on 5 February 2002 in support of Operation Noble Eagle and assumed the Quick Reaction Force mission in twenty days under the II Marine Expeditionary Force. While at Camp Pendleton, 2/23 received numerous accolades and awards to include honor graduates in six School of Infantry and 1st Marine Division Schools; the School of Infantry "Gung Ho" Award and the Paul Ison Award. 2/23 also received the highest overall score in the 1st Marine Division Rifle and Pistol match (Tyro Award) and three of the five Crew Served Weapons Competition events while at the same time sending 860 Marines to various Military Occupational Specialty schools and Primary Military Education Courses.

On 16 January 2003, 2/23 was assigned to Regimental Combat Team One (RCT-1) and deployed to Kuwait in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and on 21 March Commanded by LtCol Geffrey L. Cooper crossed into Iraq as a component of the 1st Marine Division for Operation Iraqi Freedom. The purpose of this operation was to overthrow the tyrannical regime of Saddam Hussein and to liberate the Iraqi people. The assault of Al Fajr, Iraq saw 2/23's first and only casualty. SSgt James Cawley from Company F was killed in action during the Al Fajr raid. 2/23 conducted the first civil military operation in Al Fajr during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The success of 2/23's civil military operations became the template for the 1st Marine Division's follow on humanitarian/civil operations.

One of 2/23's most memorable highlights during Operation Iraqi Freedom was securing the United Nations Compound in Baghdad from hundreds of looters. While at the UN, 2/23 restored the service in the building and helped return it back to the UN employees.

Since retrograding from Iraq in May 2003, 2/23 returned back to their respective Reserve Training Centers to complete the process of demobilization until the next time 2/23 will answer its nation's call to once again serve and continue its illustrious history.



## 2d Battalion, 23d Marines 4<sup>th</sup> Marine Division Navy Cross Award Ceremony

for

*Sergeant Scott C. Montoya*

*0900, Sunday, January 23, 2005*

*Navy and Marine Corps Reserve Training Center  
Encino, California*