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May 24, 2010 -- Col. John M. McHugh, member of the USAWC Class of 2009, received prayers and remembrances of the Memorial Chapel communities here Sunday.

McHugh died May 18 in Afghanistan while assigned to the U.S. Army Battle Command Training Program as commander of Operations Group A, Fort Leavenworth, Kan. He was serving on a NATO key leader training mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. McHugh was among five U.S. Soldiers who died in Kabul, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when enemy forces attacked their convoy with a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device.

McHugh is survived by his wife, five children and a granddaughter.

At Fort Leavenworth, a memorial service at the Lewis & Clark Center was held May 24 for the community to pay respect and honor his memory.

McHugh and his family were active members of the USAWC 'family' during his student year, 2008-09. He is remembered as an avid athlete and father -- softball player, Youth Services soccer coach, and friend to fellow students.

“During the course of the year, I never had to tap him to do anything to help me out – if he saw something that needed to be done, he approached me and told me, ‘hey, Ken, I got this. I’ll organize it’. It was terrible news for all of us,” wrote Col. Ken Johnson, chairman of Seminar Five, McHugh’s USAWC seminar. Johnson remembers him on graduation day – “a wide grin on his face, looking mighty pleased.”

“What I will always remember about John was the way he integrated his faith, his love of family, and

his service to our nation,” wrote Col. Richard Gross. “John demonstrated balance in his professional and personal life better than anyone I know, and his love for life was a lesson to us all.

“I would be remiss if I didn’t add that he was the best shortstop I ever met,” added Gross.

“I couldn’t begin to describe in words that would truly give justice to the wonderful friend, family man, and officer that John was,” said fellow student Linda Legier, director of the CASCOM Lessons Learned and Quality Assurance Directorate. “He had a smile on his face every day and left a positive impact on all with whom he came into contact.”

A formal memorial service will be scheduled in the coming months by the Alumni Affairs office. McHugh’s name will be inscribed on the memorial here, and the event will give opportunity for classmates and colleagues to honor his life.

A “Remembering Johnny Mac” Facebook site can be found at

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=122722157757475&v=wall&ref=mf>