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by J.D. Leipold



Barack Obama places the Medal of Honor around the neck of Staff Sgt. Ty Michael Carter during a ceremony, Aug. 26, 2013, at the White House.

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Aug. 26, 2013) -- Staff Sgt. Ty Michael Carter became the second Soldier to receive the nation's highest military award for extraordinary gallantry and selfless actions during the Battle of Kamdesh at Combat Outpost Keating, Afghanistan, on Oct. 3, 2009.

After telling the story of the ambush, which raged for 13 hours between 53 Soldiers and some 300 Taliban, and citing Carter's complete disregard for his own safety, President Barack Obama draped the Medal of Honor around the 33-year-old Cavalry scout's neck in the White House East Room, Aug. 26.

Near the Pakistan border, the Keating battle was the first since the Vietnam War in which two living service members received the Medal of Honor for their individual actions in the same battle. Staff Sgt. Clinton Romesha was presented the Medal of Honor on Feb. 11, 2013.

Carter braved merciless enemy fire from rocket-propelled grenades, anti-aircraft machine guns, mortars

and small-arms by running the 100-meter length of the outpost twice to retrieve ammunition for his fellow Soldiers. At the same time he provided suppressive fire to keep the enemy from over-running the post. Then, with complete disregard for his own safety, and in spite of wounds, he discarded his M-4 and ran to a critically wounded Soldier, rendered life-extending first aid. He carried the Soldier to medics as Romesha and his team provided cover.

The battle would end the lives of eight Soldiers. An additional 25 others suffered wounds.

Before the citation was read, Obama recalled Carter's words to him earlier in the day, then asked the Soldiers from his unit -- the 61st Cavalry Regt. -- to stand and be recognized along with the families of the eight fallen Soldiers.

"Ty says, 'This award is not mine alone,'" the president said. "The battle that day, he will say, was 'one team in one fight,' and everyone 'did what we could do to keep each other alive.' And some of these men are with us again. And I have to repeat this because they're among the most highly decorated units of this entire war: 37 Army Commendation Medals, 27 Purple Hearts, 18 Bronze Stars for their valor, nine Silver Stars for their gallantry."

Obama took a few minutes to address not only Carter's courage on the battlefield, but the courage to seek help for what he finally accepted and recognized in himself as post-traumatic stress.

"As Ty knows, part of the healing is facing the sources of the pain," Obama said. "So now he wants to help other troops in their own recovery. And, it is absolutely critical for us to work with brave young men like Ty to put an end to any stigma that keeps more folks from seeking help.

"So let me say it as clearly as I can to any of our troops or veterans who are watching and struggling: Look at this man. Look at this Soldier. Look at this warrior. He's as tough as they come. And, if he can find the courage and the strength, to not only seek help, but also to speak out about it, to take care of himself and to stay strong, then so can you. So can you."