

NCOs inducted into JSC-A Sergeant Audie Murphy Club

Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Chlosta
ISAF PAO

Sgt. Audie Murphy was the most decorated Soldier who served in the United States Army during World War II.

He was awarded 33 medals including the Medal of Honor and a battlefield promotion to second lieutenant for his bravery and leadership during his combat deployments to Africa and Europe.

The Sergeant Audie Murphy Club was established at Fort Hood, Texas, in 1986 to honor noncommissioned officers who have demonstrated through their performance and leadership ability the standards set by Murphy.

Three U.S. Army NCOs deployed to Afghanistan were inducted Oct. 14 into the newly created Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan SAMC: Sgt. 1st Class Marc A. Torres, Sgt. Janet Chavez and Sgt. Christopher Mancino. Staff Sgt. Layton A. Flynn was also selected but was unavailable for the ceremony.

“The Sergeant Audie Murphy Club was named after who most believe — at least until we started this global war on terrorism and extremism — to be the last American hero. But now, we meet and soldier with heroes every day,” said ISAF senior enlisted leader Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin L. Hill, who was the guest speaker at the induction ceremony. “But, Audie Murphy was a legend in his own time. So club members, you clearly have some big shoes to fill to uphold Audie Murphy’s legacy and standards of excellence.”

The JSC-A SAMC is the first chapter to be established by a sustainment command in Afghanistan.

It was stood up May 17, 2010 by Command Sgt. Maj. Clark Kinder, JSC-A; Master Sgt. Thomas Pacheco, local president; and Master Sgt. Bradley Waters, local secretary. The club conducted its first ever selection board on Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, Aug. 30.

“It’s a great honor to be inducted into a membership that is comprised of a great group of NCOs that really cares about Soldiers,” said Torres of the 158th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 43rd Sustainment Brigade, KAF. Torres has been deployed to KAF since Dec. 8, 2009, and redeployed in late October. His unit had three truck convoys which ran commodities and gun trucks as the direct support maintenance company throughout southern Afghanistan.

The second inductee was Chavez of the 382nd Transportation Theater Opening Element, 419th Joint Movement Control Battalion, Kabul.

“It means a lot,” Chavez said. “It means that my work was recognized. All these years of being squad leader, I learned a lot and I’m finally being recognized for it.”

Chavez and Torres have an interesting connection: He was her basic training drill sergeant in 2001.

“For me, it’s a great honor that I’m being inducted with Sgt. Chavez because Sgt. Chavez is actually one of my last cycle of training Soldiers when I was a basic training drill sergeant [at Fort Jackson, S.C.],” Torres said.

The third inductee was Mancino of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 82nd Sustainment Brigade, Bagram. “For me it’s a tremendous honor to be inducted into such a prestigious club,” he said. “However, this is not about me, it’s about my Soldiers. What they do is what makes me who I am as a leader.”

Mancino’s unit provides logistics support for Regional Commands North, East and Capital.

To qualify for the JSC-A SAMC, Torres said he and the other inductees passed a series of boards.

“There’s a lot of questions about leadership,” Torres said.

On June 30, the JSC-A SAMC conducted its first fundraiser, collecting \$3,800 in contributions to support the Wounded Warrior Program at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

“Being a member of this club puts you head and shoulders above your peers,” Hill said. This leads me to the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club motto, which is, ‘You lead from the front.’ As a leader, you must be clairvoyant. Leadership is action, not a position.

“Every time you stand in front of those [your] Soldiers, they are asking you three questions,” Hill said as he concluded his speech. “Those questions are, ‘Are you committed? Can I trust you? Do you care about me?’ You can only answer those questions with actions. And, the actions that [it] take[s] to answer those questions are ‘You must be available, you must be accessible and you must be approachable to your troops.’”



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Chlosta

Left to right, Sgt. 1st Class Marc A. Torres, Sgt. Christopher Mancino, and Sgt. Janet Chavez, 382nd Transportation Theater Opening Element, Kabul listen to International Security Assistance Force senior enlisted leader Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin L. Hill after they were inducted into the Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan’s Sergeant Audie Murphy Club on Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.