

Casey awards Strike Soldiers

By Sgt. Joe Padula
101st Airborne Division

Army chief of staff, Gen. George W. Casey Jr., awarded medals to Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), during a visit Oct. 12 to Forward Operating Base Wilson, Kandahar province, Afghanistan.

Casey pinned five awards: two Army Commendation Medals with "V" devices for valor and three Purple Hearts. The Soldiers commented on receiving the awards from the Army's highest-ranking officer.

"It was really great to have Gen. Casey at the ceremony," said Staff Sgt. Joseph Perminas, a 32-year-old native of Antiock, Ill., who was given the Purple Heart for the shrapnel wounds he received when a hand grenade exploded Oct. 2 in the Zharay district. "To meet him face to face was an honor, and what he said was good to hear."

Casey spoke to a crowd of Strike Soldiers attending the ceremony and talked about the importance of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team's operation in Kandahar.

"You all know that you are the main effort in Afghanistan, which is really the main effort in the war on terror," Casey said. "You all got put into a tough fight, and you are carrying a fight to the enemy in a way that I'm sure they never expected."

Before pinning the medals, Casey told the Soldiers their actions were impacting the International Security Assistance Force's progress in Operation Enduring Freedom.

"What's happening here right now is going to make a difference in ISAF's main effort, and you're on the point," Casey said.

The following individuals received awards:

Army Commendation Medal with "V" device

Pfc. Andrew Maxfield of Company C, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, ran with disregard to his own safety across an open field to his fallen comrades while taking enemy fire. He provided medical aid and stabilized all of the wounded for medical evacuation.

Pfc. Jose Rosario of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, diligently worked



Photo by Spc. Joe Padula

Gen. George W. Casey Jr., then the Army chief of staff, shakes hands with Staff Sgt. Joseph Perminas of Company A, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), during an awards ceremony Oct. 12 at Forward Operating Base Wilson, Kandahar province, Afghanistan. Casey pinned Perminas with a Purple Heart for shrapnel wounds he received when a hand grenade exploded Oct. 2 in the Zharay district.

without hesitation and with complete disregard for his own safety, to stop the bleeding of Master Sgt. Robert Pittman until further help and assistance could be provided.

Purple Heart

Second Lt. Taylor Murphy of Company B, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, received wounds from a gunshot Sept. 16 in the Zharay district.

Staff Sgt. Joseph Perminas of Company A, 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, received shrapnel wounds Oct. 2 when a grenade exploded in the Zharay district.

Sgt. Michael Turner of Company A, 526th Brigade Support Battalion, received shrapnel wounds Sept. 2 in the Zharay district.