

# NCO Stories

*A selection of Valor*



## *Soldier honored with Silver Star for combat actions in Iraq*

By Staff Sgt. Gary A. Witte  
Army News Service

A Soldier who helped pull his wounded men from a burning vehicle and ran alone through the streets of Ramadi, Iraq, to evacuate them was awarded the Silver Star Jan. 27, 2007.

Staff Sgt. David S. Anderson, a section leader with 1st Platoon, B Company, 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment under 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, was also presented the Army Commendation Medal with "V" device during a ceremony at Camp Ramadi.

Two other Soldiers from the same unit, Staff Sgt. Jason P.

Trumpower of Norwalk, Ohio, and Spc. Edward Reyes of Coral Springs, Fla., distinguished themselves in the same Sept. 24, 2006, incident and were awarded Bronze Stars with "V" devices for valor.

Anderson, who is from Batesville, Miss., said he doesn't care for the publicity surrounding his award.

"I'm just glad I was there to take care of my Soldiers and bring them home safely," he said. "To me, I was just doing my job and what I was trained to do."

The incident began when a dismounted team was attacked during an operation, and several men were wounded. Trumpower, a section leader, led his M2 Bradley fighting vehicle in an attempt

to evacuate the Soldiers after a tank accompanying him had trouble negotiating the narrow streets.

The vehicle was hit by an improvised explosive device, disabling it and critically wounding the driver. Trumpower, pinned in the vehicle, maintained security and notified higher headquarters of the situation.

Anderson, who was also responding to the call for aid in his Bradley, linked up with Trumpower and began evacuating the crew as another vehicle dealt with the casualties. Anderson was directing his vehicle back to Camp Ramadi when it, too, was disabled by an IED, wounding five inside.

The explosion knocked out communications and caused a fire in the rear compartment. Anderson, who had been outside checking his gunner and driver, attempted to let down the rear ramp and the troop door, but both were jammed.

Trumpower, with severe wounds to his hands and face, tried to get the cargo hatch open. With Anderson's help, the two men were able to open it wide enough to evacuate the vehicle. Reyes, although also wounded and disoriented by the flames, found the fire-suppression handle and doused the blaze long enough for everyone to escape.

Once everyone was out, Anderson took a rifle from the vehicle and single-handedly made sure there were no insurgents within a nearby building, while Trumpower guarded the wounded and Reyes, a medic, evaluated and stabilized them.

After they moved the wounded into the building, Anderson attempted to retrieve a radio and smoke grenade to signal their location, only to find both destroyed in the vehicle. Knowing the wounded driver was going into shock and could bleed to death without immediate evacuation, Anderson ran about 400 meters to try to get the attention of a nearby tank crew.

Unable to get the attention of the tank, he ran farther down the road to wave down a Bradley. He then led it back to the wounded Soldiers and, subsequently, supervised the loading of his men.

Col. Sean MacFarland, then the commander of 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, presented each of the men their awards and praised the heroism they exhibited. He cited their actions as examples of living the Warrior Ethos.

"They didn't give up," MacFarland said. "They did not leave their comrades behind."



U.S. Army Photo

(From right to left) On Jan. 27, 2007, Staff Sgt. David S. Anderson of 1st Platoon, B Company, 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment under 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, was awarded the Silver Star for his actions in a Sept. 24, 2006, incident in Ramadi, Iraq. Spc. Edward Reyes and Staff Sgt. Jason P. Trumpower distinguished themselves in the same Iraq incident and were awarded Bronze Stars with "V" devices for valor.

Trumpower said after the ceremony that he counted himself thankful for the other Soldiers present who helped take care of the casualties. He said he remembers the incident "like it just happened yesterday."

"Sometimes, I guess I would rather not have the award and not have those things happen," Trumpower said.

Reyes said he hasn't thought much about the incident, but he was grateful his actions were held in high regard.

"We were pretty much alone out there," Reyes said. "It could have gone dramatically different than it did."