

Minnesota National Guard Soldier Awarded Silver Star

By Sgt. Joe Roos

Staff Sgt. Chad Malmberg was presented the Silver Star in St. Paul, Minn., on Sept. 22, 2007, for gallantry in action while serving in Iraq with the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division.

Malmberg became the first Minnesota National Guard member since World War II to receive the fourth-highest military decoration, which is designated solely for valor in the face of the enemy.

Malmberg was credited for his quick, concise and heroic actions when his 25-vehicle convoy was ambushed outside Baghdad on Jan. 27, 2007. Outnumbered and trapped for nearly an hour in an ambush by 30 to 40 insurgents wielding rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns, Malmberg repeatedly put himself in the direct line of fire to coordinate ground and air support to ensure the safety of his Soldiers.

The battle went on for 40 minutes as Malmberg used all his training and leadership skills to navigate the convoy through barriers in the road and to engage the enemy. As insurgents attempted to attack the rear of the convoy, Malmberg threw a grenade at them, killing seven.

Through his leadership coordination and brave acts, the insurgents were de-

feated, and the convoy made it to safety.

After receiving his Silver Star from Gov. Tim Pawlenty and then Maj. Gen. Rick Erlandson, the 34th Infantry Division commander, Malmberg asked all the men who were in his convoy to stand. As each Soldier was recognized, it was clear he didn't think he was the only hero in the convoy.

"These are the guys," he said, after

which the crowd cheered. Once Malmberg showed the bond of his unit and the pride he had in all of his Soldiers and their dedication, he simply returned to his seat.

Following the ceremony, his unit began reintegration training into civilian life. Malmberg returned to complete a degree at Minnesota State University and planned to become a member of the St. Paul police department.



Photo courtesy Minnesota National Guard

Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty greets family members of Staff Sgt. Chad Malmberg of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry, Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, after an award ceremony at a 30-day reintegration training event in the St. Paul River Centre, St. Paul, Minn. Malmberg was awarded the Silver Star for his actions in Iraq.



Photo courtesy Minnesota National Guard

Malmberg, a St. Paul native, poses with some Iraqi children while on a mission in Iraq.



Photo by Sgt. Joe Roos

Accompanied by his chain of command, Staff Sgt. Chad Malmberg is awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action by Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty and Maj. Gen. Rick Erlandson, the 34th Infantry Division commander, at a presentation ceremony Sept. 22, 2007.