



# Alaska paratrooper earns award for heroism

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4th BCT, 25th Infantry Division

Members of the 3rd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment, assigned to the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, honored one of their own March 10 during a ceremony at their battalion headquarters on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, for actions on the battlefield during one of the unit's deployments to Afghanistan.

Staff Sgt. Jacob Bobo, currently serving as the weapons squad leader for 3rd Platoon, A Company, was awarded the Army Commendation Medal with "V" device for valor by his battalion commander as Bobo stood beside his wife, Kerri.

Lt. Col. Shawn Daniel, 3rd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment commander, pinned Bobo, noting that the award recognized the NCO's selfless actions making sure his team was moved to safety before himself.

"I personally feel that most awards represent the actions of the men under you that make you look good. But an award with valor is all about you and what you have done for those men," Daniel said.

During a tactical check point in August 2010 in Afghanistan, Bobo held a position overwatching his fellow paratroopers when an enemy rocket-propelled-grenade and small-arms attack came from the south of his position.

"The enemy was solely focused on the TCP itself. They hadn't seen me or my men yet since we were up on the ridge," Bobo said. "I got maybe one or two rounds off with the 60mm mortar tube I had with us before they shifted their fire and were targeting us, too."

Exposed on the side of the ridge facing the enemy, Bobo was in an excellent position to attack the enemy but not to defend against attacks. He led his team back to the opposite side of the ridge to use terrain as cover.

"I got my mortar team and moved them back first. My forward observer and



Photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew E. Winstead

Staff Sgt. Jacob Bobo recounts details of the event for which he was awarded the Army Commendation Medal with "V" device for valor to Lt. Col. Shawn Daniel, 3rd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment, commander.

I were the last to fall back behind the ridge on the opposing military crest after the other guys had moved," Bobo said.

The movement to cover wasn't without its own hazards, as enemy rocket-propelled grenades were getting closer to hitting their targets.

"Just before we fell back, there was this one RPG that hit so close to me and my [forward observer] that I thought we were dead," Bobo said, recalling the magnitude of the concussive blast. "When I looked up and saw that we were both

still alive, I knew that it was time for us to move."

After the entire team was behind cover and able to safely engage the enemy with well-aimed shots, Bobo's forward observer was able to call in 120mm mortar rounds on the enemy location, effectively ending the attack.

"When the 120s landed, they hit both the enemy location itself as well as the most likely path an enemy retreat would take," Bobo said. "We weren't being shot at anymore after that."