

# MEDAL OF HONOR: RANDALL D. SHUGHART

## Medal of Honor Series

*Our "Medal of Honor" series explores the stories behind the courageous Pennsylvania veterans who have been awarded the prestigious Medal of Honor for their exemplary service in the United States military. In this entry, we recognize the achievements of Randall D. Shughart, who received the Medal of Honor on May 23, 1994.*



Randall D. Shughart joined the Army while attending Big Spring High School in Newville, entering upon graduation in 1976. After completing basic training, he successfully completed AIT (advanced individual training), Airborne School, and in 1978 was assigned to the 2nd Ranger Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, at Fort Lewis, Washington. Shughart left active duty and went into the Army Reserve in June 1980. In December 1983, Shughart returned to active duty and the following year attended Special Forces training. Shughart was assigned to "Delta Force".

Sergeant First Class Shughart, United States Army, distinguished himself by actions above and beyond the call of duty on 3 October 1993, while serving as a Sniper Team Member, United States Army Special Operations Command with Task Force Ranger in Mogadishu, Somalia. Sergeant First Class Shughart provided precision sniper fires from the lead helicopter during an assault on a building and at two helicopter crash sites, while subjected to intense automatic weapons and rocket propelled grenade fires. While providing critical suppressive fires at the second crash site, Sergeant First Class Shughart and his team leader learned that ground forces were not immediately available to secure the site. Sergeant First Class Shughart and his team leader unhesitatingly volunteered to be inserted to protect the four critically wounded personnel, despite being well aware of the growing number of enemy personnel closing in on the site. After their third request to be inserted, Sergeant First Class Shughart and his team leader received permission to perform this volunteer mission. When debris and enemy ground fires at the site caused them to abort the first attempt, Sergeant First Class Shughart and his team leader were inserted one hundred meters south of the crash site. Equipped with only his sniper rifle and a pistol, Sergeant First Class Shughart and his team leader, while under intense small arms fire from the enemy, fought their way through a dense maze of shanties and shacks to reach the critically injured crewmembers. Sergeant First Class Shughart pulled the pilot and the other crewmembers from the aircraft, establishing a perimeter which placed him and his fellow sniper in the most vulnerable position. Sergeant First Class Shughart used his long-range rifle and side arm to kill an undetermined number of attackers while traveling the perimeter, protecting the downed crew. Sergeant First Class Shughart continued his protective fire until he depleted his ammunition and was fatally wounded. His actions saved the pilot's life. Sergeant First Class Shughart's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest standards of military service and reflect great credit upon him, his unit and the United States Army.