

COLONEL BOB HOWARD

MEDAL OF HONOR AWARDED FOR ACTIONS DURING THE VIETNAM WAR

United States Army
Sergeant First Class

General Orders No. 16, March 24, 1971

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving with 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, in action against enemy aggressor forces at Republic of Vietnam, on 30 December 1968. First Lieutenant Howard, distinguished himself while serving as platoon sergeant of an American-Vietnamese platoon which was on a mission to rescue a missing American soldier in enemy controlled territory. The platoon had left its helicopter landing zone and was moving out on its mission when it was attacked by an estimated two-company force. During the initial engagement, First Lieutenant Howard was wounded and his weapon destroyed by a grenade explosion. First Lieutenant Howard saw his platoon leader had been wounded seriously and was exposed to fire. Although unable to walk, and weaponless, First Lieutenant Howard unhesitatingly crawled through a hail of fire to retrieve his wounded leader. As First Lieutenant Howard was administering first aid and removing the officer's equipment, an enemy bullet struck one of the ammunition pouches on the lieutenant's belt, detonating several magazines of ammunition. First Lieutenant Howard momentarily sought cover and then realizing that he must rejoin the platoon, which had been disorganized by the enemy attack, he again began dragging the seriously wounded officer toward the platoon area. Through his outstanding example of indomitable courage and bravery, First Lieutenant Howard was able to rally the platoon into an organized defense force. With complete disregard for his safety, First Lieutenant Howard crawled from position to position, administering first aid to the wounded, giving encouragement to the defenders and directing their fire on the encircling enemy. For 3 1/2 hours First Lieutenant Howard's small force and supporting aircraft successfully repulsed enemy attacks and finally were in sufficient control to permit the landing of rescue helicopters. First Lieutenant Howard personally supervised the loading of his men and did not leave the bullet-swept landing zone until all were aboard safely. First Lieutenant Howard's gallantry in action, his complete devotion to the welfare of his men at the risk of his life were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit on himself, his unit, and the United States Army.