

## **COLONEL BOB HOWARD**

### **SILVER STAR AWARDED FOR ACTIONS DURING THE VIETNAM WAR**

United States Army  
Sergeant First Class

Headquarters, U.S. Army, Vietnam, General Orders No. 371 (February 3, 1969)

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918, takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star to Sergeant First Class Robert Lewis Howard (ASN: RA-14628152), United States Army, for gallantry in action while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces. Sergeant First Class Howard distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions from 12 to 20 November 1968, during an operation deep within enemy-held territory. As his platoon was being inserted into the area, it came under heavy fire from all directions. Sergeant Howard leaped from his helicopter before it touched down and began to return fire, providing protection for his men while they dismounted and moved safely off the landing zone. Seeing two enemy soldiers in a wood line, he charged their position and killed them both. When the unit was attacked by a company-size force on the night of 16 November, he went to each platoon member, encouraging them and directing their fire while completely exposing himself to the communist barrage. Two days later while Sergeant Howard was leading the point element, the platoon was ambushed by an estimated two North Vietnamese Army companies. He skillfully maneuvered his men so that the enemy was caught in a deadly crossfire and the ambush was broken. The following day, Sergeant Howard had again taken the point element when he observed an estimated battalion-size ambush. Although wounded in the initial exchange of fire, he exposed himself to the aggressors to place effective fire on them and enable his platoon to take cover. Moving from position to position, he administered first aid to the wounded and set up a landing zone so that they could be evacuated. As the first ambulance helicopter came in, it was struck by hostile machine gun fire and burst into flames. Sergeant Howard, although wounded a second time, ran one hundred and fifty meters to where the ship had crashed and rescued a trapped pilot from the blazing wreckage. Once the entire crew was free from the aircraft, he led them back to the platoon while providing covering fire. Three hours later another helicopter succeeded in landing and the casualties were evacuated, but Sergeant Howard refused to leave. The next morning, he saw three North Vietnamese soldiers maneuvering towards his element and immediately opened fire, killing them.