

NAVY CROSS



ERIC MICHAEL SMITH
Corporal, U.S. Marine Corps
Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines
1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force
Ramadi, Iraq, 6 April 2004
Home of record: Waxahachie, Texas

Citation:

The President of the United States of America takes pleasure in presenting the Navy Cross to Corporal Eric M. Smith, United States Marine Corps, for extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy while serving as Squad Leader, Second Platoon, Company E, Second Battalion, Fourth Marine Regiment, FIRST Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Central Command in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM on 6 April 2004. As part of the company's quick reaction force, Corporal Smith's platoon was ordered to move north and reinforce a squad which was under attack. En route, two high-mobility multipurpose-wheeled vehicles were ambushed leaving the platoon commander critically wounded. Under heavy machine gun and rocket-propelled grenade fire, Corporal Smith assumed command of the platoon, and led them 50 meters across open ground to covered positions. He then ran back across the fire-swept field to evacuate his platoon commander and his weapons. Employing machine guns and the platoon's 7-ton truck, Corporal Smith coordinated and led a counterattack against the insurgent forces and freed the isolated squad. He coordinated with an Army Bradley Fighting Vehicle Platoon upon their arrival, facilitated the evacuation of casualties and devised the withdrawal plan for all units back to the command post. By his bold leadership, wise judgment, and loyal dedication to duty, Corporal Smith reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.