

NAVY CROSS



SAMUEL J. BADNEK

Private, U.S. Marine Corps
Company H, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines
Chu Lai, Republic of Vietnam, 18 August 1965
Entered service at: Youngstown, Ohio

Citation:

The President of the United States of America takes pleasure in presenting the Navy Cross to Private Samuel J. Badnek (MCSN: 2102032), United States Marine Corps, for extraordinary heroism while serving with Company H, Second Battalion, Fourth Marines, THIRD Marine Division (Reinforced), Fleet Marine Force, during Operation Starlite near Chu Lai, Vietnam on 18 August 1965. Private Badnek's platoon was temporarily pinned down by intense automatic weapons, mortar and grenade fire delivered by an insurgent communist (Viet Cong) assault force. In the early moments of the engagement, two enemy grenadiers were silenced, causing the Viet Cong to fall back and regroup, all the while keeping the Marines under intense fire. Realizing the seriousness of the situation, and with total disregard for his own safety, Private Badnek stripped all combat equipment from his body and boldly dashed forty-five yards through heavy fire to reach the enemy. Hurling several grenades into the enemy position, he personally killed eight of the guerrillas. Stunned by his one man assault, the remaining enemy forces rapidly became disorganized and were unable to conduct a counterattack on the Marines now advancing on them. Although he sustained a head wound during his heroic act, Private Badnek remained undeterred as he continued to ferociously engage the enemy, directing accurate and effective rifle fire into the enemy position. Later, after withdrawing to a helicopter evacuation site, he assisted in loading his wounded comrades aboard the aircraft, refusing evacuation himself until all other casualties had embarked. Private Badnek's courageous actions, inspiring combative spirit and loyal devotion to duty reflected great credit upon traditions of the United States Naval Service.