



* * * GERALD O. YOUNG * * *

Rank and organization: Captain, US Air Force, 37th ARS, Da Nang AFB, Republic of Vietnam. Place and date: Khe Sanh, 9 November 1967. Entered service at: Colorado Springs, CO. Born: 9 May 1930, Chicago, IL.

CITATION

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. CPT Young distinguished himself while serving as a helicopter crew rescue commander. CPT Young was flying escort for another helicopter attempting the night rescue of an Army ground reconnaissance team in imminent danger of death or capture. Previous attempts had resulted in the loss of 2 helicopters to hostile ground fire. The endangered team was positioned on the side of a steep slope which required unusual airmanship on the part of CPT Young to effect pickup. Heavy automatic weapons fire from the surrounding enemy severely damaged 1 rescue helicopter, but it was able to extract 3 of the team. The commander of this aircraft recommended to CPT Young that further rescue attempts be abandoned because it was not possible to suppress the concentrated fire from enemy automatic weapons. With full knowledge of the danger involved, and the fact that supporting helicopter gunships were low on fuel and ordinance, CPT Young hovered under intense fire until the remaining survivors were aboard. As he maneuvered the aircraft for takeoff, the enemy appeared at point-blank range and raked the aircraft with automatic weapons fire. The aircraft crashed, inverted, and burst into flames. CPT Young escaped through a window of the burning aircraft. Disregarding serious burns, CPT Young aided one of the wounded men and attempted to lead the hostile forces away from his position. Later, despite intense pain from his burns, he declined to accept rescue because he observed hostile forces setting up automatic weapons positions to entrap the rescue aircraft. For more than 17 hours he evaded the enemy until rescue aircraft could be brought into the area. Through his extraordinary heroism, aggressiveness, and concern for his fellow man, CPT Young reflected the highest credit upon himself, the US Air Force, and the Armed Forces of his country.