

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF

THE SILVER STAR MEDAL

TO

MICHAEL R. WEST

Master Sergeant Michael R. West distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an armed enemy of the United States at Panjwai Village, Afghanistan from 3 September 2006 to 9 September 2006. During this period, while attached to an Operational Detachment Alpha team, Sergeant West displayed extraordinary bravery, technical skill, and a complete disregard for his own safety during two climactic battles over five days of near continuous contact with hostile forces. Sergeant West was the Joint Terminal Attack Controller supporting Special Forces maneuver elements tasked to conduct offensive operations in support of Operation MEDUSA in Panjwai Village, Afghanistan. Sergeant West's mastery of air to ground operations and willingness to expose himself to direct and accurate enemy fire while successfully coordinating aerial attacks were credited with saving the lives of 51 Special Forces Soldiers and 33 coalition partners during the fighting in and around Panjwai. During the furious battles, Sergeant West's courage under fire was decisive to his surgical control of over 88 fixed and rotary wing attack aircraft; intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platforms; and medical evacuation assets. Delivering more than 24,000 pounds of precision ordnance against waves of enemy attacks, Sergeant West's employment of airpower was credited with more than 500 enemy killed in action, and on numerous occasions either prevented friendly forces from being overrun, or directly enabled friendly forces to break contact and regroup while minimizing casualties. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Sergeant West has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

