



CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF  
THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS  
FIRST OAK LEAF CLUSTER  
TO  
STAFF SERGEANT COLE E. PANNING

Staff Sergeant Cole E. Panning distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as a Pararescue Specialist of an HH-53C Rescue Helicopter near Khe Sanh, Republic of Vietnam, on 26 May 1972. On that date, Sergeant Panning's outstanding airmanship and sound technical skill displayed under extremely hazardous conditions, contributed significantly to the rescue of two United States Air Force aircrewmembers from certain death or capture by hostile armed forces. With total disregard for his own personal safety, Sergeant Panning exposed himself to hostile fire in order to man his gun position throughout the rescue. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Sergeant Panning reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

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