



CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

TO

TECHNICAL SERGEANT BRANDON S. STUEMKE

Technical Sergeant Brandon S. Stuemke distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as a Pararescue Element Leader, 83rd Expeditionary Rescue Squadron, 455th Expeditionary Operations Group, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing, Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, from 12 November 2010 to 13 November 2010. Sergeant Stuemke and his team performed casualty evacuation in support of deliberate operations by United States Army Task Force Bastogne in the highly contested Pech River Valley. During the three-day period, Sergeant Stuemke launched on six missions that resulted in 20 lives saved and the return to friendly control of six coalition soldiers killed in action. On the afternoon of 13 November 2010, Sergeant Stuemke disregarded his personal safety as he voluntarily flew into and hoisted down into a highly hostile and heavily defended area to evacuate five critically injured soldiers. Once on the ground, Sergeant Stuemke quickly prioritized the casualties and rigged them for hoist extraction as the enemy raked the hovering helicopter and the landing zone with small arms fire. Throughout the engagement, he repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire, expedited the evacuation of the wounded, and ensured all the casualties were safely hoisted into the helicopter. Sergeant Stuemke decisively targeted and returned fire on an insurgent position and caused the enemy to break contact which allowed the evacuation effort to continue and ensured the safety of his team and the wounded. His actions enabled the success of an operation that secured large stores of enemy weapons and munitions in addition to significantly disrupting insurgent activity against coalition forces in Regional Command East. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Sergeant Stuemke reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

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