



CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF
THE SILVER STAR
TO
STAFF SERGEANT NICHOLAS J. BRUNETTO

Staff Sergeant Nicholas J. Brunetto distinguished himself by gallantry in action while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States, at Ghara Village, Sherzad District, Afghanistan, on 8 February 2020. On that date, in support of Operation FREEDOMS SENTINEL and the Resolute Support mission, he was a Pararescueman attached to an Army Special Forces team as they conducted a threat vulnerability assessment and key leader engagement. Upon completion of the engagement, he and his team found themselves in the kill zone of a well organized enemy ambush. He narrowly escaped the initial 150-round burst from a crew-served machine gun which severely injured eleven of his teammates. Without hesitation, and with rounds impacting within feet of his position, he engaged the threat, began immediate medical care for injured personnel, and simultaneously established a casualty collection point. As the situation deteriorated, he pulled patients away from the close quarter ambush while directing teammates to a more secure location. Once behind cover, Sergeant Brunetto managed the mass casualty event through triage and treatment of the most critically wounded. During triage, he determined that a blood transfusion was immediately required for one of his most critical teammates, and without regard for his own personal safety, maneuvered back through incoming fire to the kill zone to retrieve vital medical equipment. Upon returning to the casualties, he established two large-bore bone catheters to infuse blood and save his teammate's life. He then directed security and distributed weapons and ammunition to protect injured personnel being moved to the helicopter landing zone. During helicopter evacuation, he again exposed himself to enemy gunfire to carry and load several wounded patients. As the aircraft came under direct and effective enemy gunfire, he provided suppressive fire ensuring the helicopter's safe extraction of eight critically injured Americans, and three partner force soldiers. His treatment and removal of the casualties from the battlefield enabled the Special Forces Team to regain the initiative and resume offensive action. He elected to remain on target and provide security while additional compounds were cleared and sensitive items were collected. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Sergeant Brunetto reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

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