



CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF

THE SILVER STAR

TO

TECHNICAL SERGEANT JOSHUA A. SWARTZ

Staff Sergeant Joshua A. Swartz distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an armed enemy of the United States while supporting Operation IRAQI FREEDOM on 8 April 2003. On that date, Sergeant Swartz during a ten-hour combat mission, provided key early warning, situation awareness, and combat medical care for his advanced reconnaissance element poised for a night assault. As the assault began, Sergeant Swartz's vehicle flanked the friendly coalition maneuver force when they discovered a possible enemy weapon. Upon investigation, his vehicle came under direct and heavy rocket and machine gun fire. For the next seven minutes a wave of fire ensued killing everything in its path. Both vehicles in his element were directly hit by rocket fire destroying the vehicles and inflicting immediate casualties and serious injuries to the eight-man team, wounding Sergeant Swartz. Risking his life while still under fire, he pulled a seriously injured soldier from the hood of the burning vehicle. Using incredible strength, he moved the soldier to safety while still under direct enemy fire. Here, Sergeant Swartz briefly treated the wounded soldier and then returned to the burning vehicle to search for other members of his team. He located Staff Sergeant Sather, an Air Force Combat Controller, under the burning vehicle and immediately began to pull his body free from the burning vehicle. Sergeant Swartz's aggressive attempts to resuscitate the fallen Airman were without success and he unwillingly relented to the loss of his friend as he moved Sergeant Sather's body clear of the burning vehicle. Upon his return to the first wounded soldier, he began to coordinate via radio to facilitate a link-up with friendly forces. After linking-up with friendly forces, Sergeant Swartz coordinated with the Ground Forces Commander for the accountability, treatment, and exfiltration of the entire team to include the recovery of his fallen teammate. With total disregard to his own life while under fire on numerous occasions, Sergeant Swartz's actions were directly responsible for saving the life of an Army soldier, aiding in saving the lives of his remaining team, and the recovery of Sergeant Sather. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Sergeant Swartz has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

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