

**Remarks by Master Chief Special Warfare Operator  
BRITT K. SLABINSKI  
United States Navy**

**Upon receiving the Congressional Medal of Honor  
May 24, 2018 at the White House**

My fellow Americans. It has been nearly seventeen years since we were attacked – right here on our own soil.

Our friends, our families, our very way of life was attacked – and changed forever.

Less than four months after that attack, in January of 2002, a small team of Americans departed home for the far away country of Afghanistan.

We went to defend our country and our communities; our families and neighbors.

We went to defend those unable to go, and for strangers we will never know.

We went *for* all – at the risk of it all.

We were from all corners of the country, all branches of the military: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines.

We were, sons, daughters, husbands, wives, brothers and sisters. We were all Americans, we were all family, all part of one team.

We were young, inexperienced and eager to fight.

Nothing of consequence is ever accomplished alone. The Medal of Honor citation reads, “For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty.”

That defines the deeds of many that day in March 2002 on that hostile mountain top forever known as Roberts Ridge.

This Medal was awarded to me, but it belongs to so many others.

It belongs to my teammates who followed me that night, without hesitation and fully aware of the risk. I am exceptionally proud of you.

This Medal belongs to those who came to rescue us; to the air crews who, not knowing a name, flew into harm’s way again and again to defend us.

And to the Rangers, without whom all would have been lost.

We don’t fight for awards, but much of what others did that day has gone unrecognized.

But I remember you and I always will.

This Medal belongs to the families that stay at home not knowing what faces their loved one.

Most importantly, this Medal of Honor belongs to the seven Americans killed in action on that mountain top:

Neil, John, Phil, Marc, Matt, Brad and Jason. - They gave all, for all of us.

This honor is yours for you are the true heroes.

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The Medal of Honor symbolizes all that we are as Americans, but it also stands as a reminder to those who wish us harm.

It conveys we are not afraid of you.

It states that we will use our last breath, our last thought, and sacrifice our last heartbeat to defeat you; and that we will surely do.

Thank you.