

NEWS RELEASE IMMEDIATE RELEASE - FEB 28th (#1)

WHAT: Medals Of Valor To 3 Fallen Army JROTC Cadets Killed
 in Florida High School Shooting by USTF

WHERE: Transported To JROTC Unit at Marjory Stoneman Douglas HS
 Via USAF Honor Detail From 358 Fighter Squadron

How: Operation Intrepid Eagle, The medals Of Valor Flight To Fla.

WHEN: March 1st Thursday 10:30 AM Stephens Bldg Lobby (USTF Office)

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Missouri Veterans Foundation Honors 3 Fallen Army JROTC Cadets With Medal 's Of Valor Missouri USAF Fighter Sqdn. To Take Medals To Florida

Columbia Mo. - On Tuesday February 27th the United States Exercise Tiger Foundation (USTF) sent three Medals of Combat Valor and plaque citations to honor the 3 Army JROTC Cadets killed in the Feb 14th Florida High School attack in Parkland. "Operation Intrepid Eagle, The Medals of Valor Flight To Florida" is what this is being called said Susan Haines, the USTF National Director. In a historic mission, The United States Air Force's 358th Fighter Squadron based at Whiteman AFB will pick up the 40 lb box at the USTF's National Office located at the Stephens Bldg on Cherry St. downtown Columbia on Thursday March 1st at 10:30 AM. The 358th will then take the box back to base. A senior sergeant will escort the box containing the medals flags and citations flying from Missouri to Florida. There the sergeant will be met with USAF officers and the ALL will deliver the medals to the JROTC unit at the High School.

The Medal Of Combat Valor or MCV is the highest medal the USTF has. It is normally for active duty and veterans who have been deployed to a combat theatre. " In this situation it was felt that those three cadets who were in uniform met the requirements". Stated Susan Haines The USTF's National Executive Director." For those 7 minutes, they were in combat." She added.

The USTF is a nationally recognized non-profit based in Columbia Missouri that honors veterans and active military through out the nation. It is named after the WWII pre D-Day naval battle of Exercise Tiger. Code named "Tiger" the training exercise turned into a battle when US Navy LST's (troop ships) of Convoy Taffy 4 were attacked by German Navy warships on April 28 1944. Since 1989 the USTF has annually honored this battle in which a 1000 soldiers and sailors were killed. Over 200 troops killed were from Missouri. A memorial is located in Mexico Mo. And State Highway 54 is renamed in their honor from I 70 to the city of Mexico. The USTF is recognized by the Dept. of Defense, Secretaries of the Navy, Army and Air Force as well as the US Coast Guard which annually takes part in wreath laying with the USTF. Its annual "Adopt A Warrior" program is a hallmark in Columbia every November for 19 years.

Cadet Peter Wangs sacrifice saving fellow students earned him the US Army's Medal Of heroism last week. Of him USTF National Director Susan Haines said, "He was intrepid in spirit, and undaunted in his deeds. His deeds on that afternoon was to confront evil, and until his last breath, held open a door saving countless students. He could have saved himself, but with cadet Wang, others came first". Also receiving medals and citations are cadets Alaina Petty and Martin Duque. Those two cadets also were gunned down as they tried to help fallen students and doing so became easy targets for the gunman.

"This is what the USTF does. We honor those who gave their all in uniform for our nation. The legacy of those veterans who died during Exercise Tiger 74 years ago lives on in each person we honor today. Cadets Wang, Petty and Duque represent all that's good in our society. And when courage counted most these three answered that call. We can do no less than to honor their sacrifice. They left us to soon, but we wish them God Speed in their new journey." said Haines.

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