

Colonel Robert L. Howard

Col. Robert L. Howard entered military service on July 20, 1956 and was medically retired on September 30, 1992. He received a direct appointment from Master Sergeant to First Lieutenant in December 1969. His 36 years of military service included over 33 years on airborne status. He participated in two movies concerning airborne and special operations missions, both featuring John Wayne. He made a parachute jump on the filming of *The Longest Day* and as an Airborne Instructor in *The Green Berets*.

Military assignments include duty with the 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions; 2d Ranger Battalion; 3d, 5th, and 6th, Special Forces Group; 5th Infantry Division; 7th Corps, XVIII Airborne Corps. He served in the Eighth United States Army and Combined Forces Command. Service in Vietnam included serving with 1/327th Airborne Infantry, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, 5th Special Forces Group, and Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, Studies and Observations Group (MACV-SOG). Colonel Howard commanded a Reconnaissance Company, MACV-SOG in Vietnam, a separate Ranger Company at Fort Benning, Georgia, two Ranger Companies while assigned to the 2d Ranger Battalion. He was the Post Commander of Kelly Barracks, Stuttgart, Germany, Executive Officer of the 2d Ranger Battalion, and the Mountain Ranger Camp.

Military Instructor duties include Airborne, Ranger, and Pathfinder at the Infantry School, Tactics at the Command and General Staff College, Special Operations and Special Forces at the Special Warfare Center. Staff assignments have included duty with AC of S, G3, XVIII, Airborne Corps, C3, J3, G3, Combined Forces Command/Eighth United States Army, Korea. Military training includes the Basic and Advanced Infantry Courses at the Infantry School; Special Forces Enlisted and Officer Courses at the Special Warfare Center and School; Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, and the National War College in Washington, D.C.

Col. Howard was a distinguished honor graduate of the Ranger Course, Pathfinder Course, and Parachute Rigger School. Received the Outstanding Infantryman's Trophy as Outstanding Infantry Officer of Class 1979–1980 at the Command and General Staff College. He graduated from the National War College, Class 1987–1988. His military service also contributed to exceptional civilian recognition for service to his nation. He received the Outstanding Young Man of America award 1970; nominated as one of 10 Outstanding Young Men in America in 1971 and 1972; inducted into Military Hall of Fame, Hoover Institute, Stanford University in 1980, inducted into Military Hall of Fame, Veterans of Foreign Wars, State of Alabama in 1973; Promoted to Colonel for Life, Alabama State Militia, State of Alabama, Governor George Wallace, 1976.

AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:

Congressional Medal of Honor

Distinguished Service Cross

Silver Star

Bronze Star for Valor, 3d Oak Leaf Cluster

Purple Heart, 8th Award, 7th Oak Leaf Cluster

Defense Superior Service Medal

Legion of Merit, 3d Oak Leaf Cluster

Bronze Star for Meritorious Achievement

Air Medal for Valor, 2d Oak Leaf Cluster

Army Commendation Medal for Valor, 3d Oak Leaf Cluster

Air Medal for Aerial Flights

Army Meritorious Service Medal, 2d Oak Leaf Cluster

Army Commendation Medal for Meritorious Achievement,
2d Oak Leaf Cluster

Joint Service Commendation Medal

Joint Service Achievement Medal

Army Achievement Medal

Good Conduct Medal 4th Award

National Defense Service Medal

Armed Forces Reserve Medal

PNCO Ribbon W/2 device

Army Overseas Ribbon

Army Service Ribbon

Expeditionary Medal, 2d Oak Leaf Cluster

Vietnam Service Medal

Vietnam Campaign Medal with 60 device

Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Gold Star

Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star

Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Bronze Star

Vietnam Honor Medal 2d Award

Vietnamese Wound Medal

Vietnamese Civil Action Medal 2d Award

Army Presidential Unit Citation, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster

Navy Valorous Unit Citation

Army Meritorious Unit Citation

Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster

Republic of Korea Samil Medal

Combat Infantryman's Badge

Aircraft Crewman's Badge

Master Parachute Badge

Pathfinder Badge

Air Assault Badge

Expert Infantryman's Badge

Vietnamese Ranger Badge

Army Ranger Tab

Special Forces Qualification Tab

Thai Master Parachute Wings

Vietnamese Master Parachute Badge

French Parachutist Badge

Korean Master Parachute Badge

Thai Balloonist Badge

EDUCATION:

University of Maryland 1962–AA, Business Administration

Texas Christian University 1973–BA, Police Administration

Central Michigan University 1980–MA, Management and Supervision

Central Michigan University 1981–MA, Public Administration

SERVICE; UNIT ASSIGNMENT/ENLISTED AND OFFICER HISTORY:

Commissioned from Master Sergeant to First Lieutenant in 1969

Assignments with 82d Airborne Division: Rifleman, Squad Leader, Platoon Leader, Executive Officer, and Company Commander, C Company, 1/504th Parachute Infantry

Assignments with 101st Airborne Division: Squad Leader and Platoon Sergeant, 1/327th Airborne Infantry

Assignments with the 5th Infantry Division: Squad Leader and Platoon Sergeant, C Co 2/61st Infantry

Weapons Specialist, Demolition Team Leader, Charlie Company, 3d Special Forces Group

Operations and Intelligence Sergeant, Headquarters Company, 6th Special Forces Group

Team Leader, Weapons Specialist, B52, 5th Special Forces Group, Vietnam

Team Leader and Reconnaissance Company First Sergeant, 5th Special Forces Group, Forward Operational Base # 2, Vietnam

Procurement/Retention NCO, Headquarters, Special Warfare Center/School

Executive Officer, Team Leader Reconnaissance Company, Command and Control Central, MACV-SOG, Vietnam

Company Commander, Reconnaissance Company, Command and Control Central, MACV-SOG, Vietnam

Ground Training Committee Chief, Airborne Department, Infantry School

Tower Training Committee Chief, Airborne Department, Infantry School

Pathfinder Committee Chief, Airborne Department, Infantry School

Company Commander C Co 75th Rangers, 1/29 Infantry

Company Commander A Co 2/75th Rangers

Company Commander C Co 2/75th Rangers

Company Commander HHC, 2/75th Rangers

Officer in Charge Patrolling Committee, Mountain Ranger Division, Infantry School

Executive Officer, Mountain Ranger Division, Infantry School

Instructor Department of Tactics, Command and General Staff College

Chief Instructor Phase One Special Forces Training, Special Warfare School

Committee Chief, Officer and Enlisted Special Forces

Qualification Course, Special Warfare School

Chief, Joint Combined UW Task Force, Korean Special Forces, Songnam, Korea

Battalion Commander and Headquarters Commandant VII Corps Special Troops, Stuttgart, Germany

Post Commander and Moehringen/Degerloch Military Sub Community, Kelly Barracks, Stuttgart, Germany

Special Operations Commander, USFK

Special Assistant Cmdg General, 5th USA

C of S, Ops/Plns, LAIO, Reserve Components, 5th USA, Coalition Forces, Desert Shield/ Storm

OVERSEAS WARTIME SERVICE:

Vietnam Service includes service with 1/327 Inf, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne, Delta Project, B52, 5th Special Forces Group, MACV-SOG, FOB # 2 and CCC. Overseas tours include France, Germany, Italy, Korea, Panama and Vietnam

DISTINCTION ACHIEVED DURING MILITARY TRAINING:

Distinguished Honor Graduate, Parachute Rigger Course

Distinguished Honor Graduate Pathfinder Course

Distinguished Honor Graduate Ranger Course

Outstanding Infantryman Class 1979–1980, Command and General Staff College

Company Commander of Advanced Infantry Class 1973, Infantry Officers Advance Class, Infantry School

CIVILIAN AWARDS AND TITLES:

10 Outstanding Young Men in America, 1971–1972

Outstanding American Citizen Award, Birmingham, Alabama – 1973

Inducted into Military Hall of Fame, Hoover Institute, Stanford University – 1980

Ticker Tape Parade Honoree, Key to the City Award, New York City, NY – 1986

Outstanding Citizen Award, Dallas, Texas – 1993

Inducted into the State of Texas, War Memorial, Vietnam Section, Medal of Honor Groove, Statue Included, McAllen, Texas – 1998

FRATERNAL MEMBERSHIPS:

Honorary National Aide De Camp, National Commander American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars

LIFE MEMBER: VFW, ALG, AMVETS, DAV, VVA, Special Operations, and Special Forces Associations, Military Order of Purple Heart, Legion of Valor, Medal of Honor Society, US Army Ranger Association (USARA)

STATE OF ALABAMA TITLE: "Colonel of the Militia"

ALUMNI:

Texas Christian University

Central Michigan University

National War College

Col. Howard was inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame in 2005.

Col. Howard was inducted into the Army Aviation Association of America Hall of Fame in 2010.

After retirement from military service in 1992, Col. Howard was employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs. He retired in January 2006 after 52 years of government service. Col. Howard passed away on December 23, 2009 in Waco, TX after battling pancreatic cancer. He was buried at Arlington National Cemetery on February 22, 2010.