

= Michael A. Monsoor =

Michael Anthony Monsoor (April 5 , 1981 ? September 29 , 2006) was a United States Navy SEAL who was killed during the Iraq War and posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor . Monsoor enlisted in the United States Navy in 2001 and graduated from Basic Underwater Demolition / SEAL training in 2004 . After further training he was assigned to Delta Platoon , SEAL Team 3 .

Delta Platoon was sent to Iraq in April 2006 and assigned to train Iraqi Army soldiers in Ramadi . Over the next five months , Monsoor and his platoon frequently engaged in combat with insurgent forces . On September 29 , 2006 , an insurgent threw a grenade onto a rooftop where Monsoor and several other SEALs and Iraqi soldiers were positioned . Monsoor quickly smothered the grenade with his body , absorbing the resulting explosion and saving his comrades from serious injury or death . Monsoor died about 30 minutes later from serious wounds caused by the grenade explosion .

On March 31 , 2008 , the United States Department of Defense confirmed that Michael Monsoor would posthumously receive the Medal of Honor . U.S. President George W. Bush presented the medal to Monsoor 's parents on April 8 , 2008 . In October 2008 , Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter announced that DDG @-@ 1001 , the second ship in the Zumwalt @-@ class of guided missile destroyers , would be named Michael Monsoor in his honor .

= = Early life and education = =

Monsoor was born April 5 , 1981 , in Long Beach , California , the third of four children of Sally Ann (Boyle) and George Paul Monsoor . His father also served in the United States military as a Marine . His father is of Lebanese and Irish descent , and his mother has Irish ancestry . When he was a child , Monsoor was afflicted with asthma but strengthened his lungs by racing his siblings in the family 's swimming pool . He attended Dr. Walter C. Ralston Intermediate School and Garden Grove High School in Garden Grove , California and played tight @-@ end on the school 's football team , graduating in 1999 .

= = Career = =

= = = U.S. Navy SEALs = = =

Monsoor enlisted in the United States Navy on March 21 , 2001 , and attended Basic Training at Recruit Training Command Great Lakes , Illinois . Upon graduation from basic training , he attended Quartermaster " A " School , and then transferred to Naval Air Station Sigonella , Italy for a short period of time . He entered Basic Underwater Demolition / SEAL (BUD / S) training and graduated from Class 250 on September 2 , 2004 , as one of the top performers in his class . After BUD / S , he completed advanced SEAL training courses including parachute training at Basic Airborne School , cold weather combat training in Kodiak , Alaska , and six months of SEAL Qualification Training in Coronado , California , graduating in March 2005 . The following month , his rating changed from Quartermaster to Master @-@ at @-@ Arms , and he was assigned to Delta Platoon , SEAL Team 3 .

= = = Iraq War = = =

During Operation Kentucky Jumper , SEAL Team Three was sent to Ramadi , Iraq in April 2006 and assigned to train Iraqi Army soldiers . As a communicator and machine @-@ gunner on patrols , Monsoor carried 100 pounds (45 kg) of gear in temperatures often exceeding 100 degrees . He took a lead position to protect the platoon from frontal assault and the team was frequently involved in engagements with insurgent fighters . During the first five months of deployment , the team reportedly killed 84 insurgents .

During an engagement on May 9 , 2006 , Monsoor ran into a street while under continuous insurgent gunfire to rescue an injured comrade . Monsoor was awarded the Silver Star for this action , and was also awarded the Bronze Star for his service in Iraq .

= = Death = =

On September 29 , 2006 , Monsoor 's platoon engaged four insurgents in a firefight , killing one and injuring another . Anticipating further attacks , Monsoor , three SEAL snipers and three Iraqi Army soldiers took up a rooftop position . Civilians aiding the insurgents blocked off the streets , and a nearby mosque broadcast a message for people to fight against the Americans and the Iraqi soldiers . Monsoor was protecting other SEALs , two of whom were 15 feet away from him . Monsoor 's position made him the only SEAL on the rooftop with quick access to an escape route .

A grenade was thrown onto the rooftop by an insurgent on the street below . The grenade hit Monsoor in the chest and fell onto the floor . Immediately , Monsoor yelled " Grenade ! " and jumped onto the grenade , covering it with his body . The grenade exploded seconds later and Monsoor 's body absorbed most of the force of the blast . Monsoor was severely wounded and although evacuated immediately , he died 30 minutes later . Two other SEALs next to him at the time were injured by the explosion but survived .

Monsoor died on September 29 , 2006 , in ar @-@ Ramadi , Iraq , and was described as a " quiet professional " and a " fun @-@ loving guy " by those who knew him . He is buried at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery in San Diego .

= = = Funeral = = =

During the funeral , as the coffin was moving from the hearse to the grave site , Navy SEALs were lined up forming a column of twos on both sides of the pallbearers route , with the coffin moving up the center . As the coffin passed each SEAL , they slapped down the gold Trident each had removed from his own uniform and deeply embedded it into the wooden coffin . For nearly 30 minutes the slaps were audible from across the cemetery as nearly every SEAL on the West Coast repeated the act .

The display moved many attending the funeral , including President Bush , who spoke about the incident later during a speech stating : " The procession went on nearly half an hour , and when it was all over , the simple wooden coffin had become a gold @-@ plated memorial to a hero who will never be forgotten . ?

= = Awards and decorations = =

= = = Medal of Honor = = =

On March 31 , 2008 , the United States Department of Defense confirmed that Michael Monsoor would posthumously receive the Medal of Honor from the President of the United States , George W. Bush . Monsoor 's parents , Sally and George Monsoor , received the medal on his behalf at an April 8 , ceremony at the White House held by the President . Monsoor became the fourth American servicemember and second Navy SEAL ? each killed in the line of duty ? to receive the United States ' highest military award during the War on Terrorism .

= = = Medal of Honor citation = = =

" The President of the United States in the name of The Congress takes pride in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR posthumously to
MASTER AT ARMS SECOND CLASS , SEA , AIR and LANDMICHAEL A. MONSOOR
UNITED STATES NAVY

For service as set forth in the following CITATION :

" For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as Automatic Weapons Gunner for Naval Special Warfare Task Group Arabian Peninsula , in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM on 29 September 2006 . As a member of a combined SEAL and Iraqi Army sniper overwatch element , tasked with providing early warning and stand @-@ off protection from a rooftop in an insurgent @-@ held sector of Ar Ramadi , Iraq , Petty Officer Monsoor distinguished himself by his exceptional bravery in the face of grave danger . In the early morning , insurgents prepared to execute a coordinated attack by reconnoitering the area around the element 's position . Element snipers thwarted the enemy 's initial attempt by eliminating two insurgents . The enemy continued to assault the element , engaging them with a rocket @-@ propelled grenade and small arms fire . As enemy activity increased , Petty Officer Monsoor took position with his machine gun between two teammates on an outcropping of the roof . While the SEALs vigilantly watched for enemy activity , an insurgent threw a hand grenade from an unseen location , which bounced off Petty Officer Monsoor 's chest and landed in front of him . Although only he could have escaped the blast , Petty Officer Monsoor chose instead to protect his teammates . Instantly and without regard for his own safety , he threw himself onto the grenade to absorb the force of the explosion with his body , saving the lives of his two teammates . By his undaunted courage , fighting spirit , and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of certain death , Petty Officer Monsoor gallantly gave his life for his country , thereby reflecting great credit upon himself and upholding the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service . "

= = = = Silver Star citation = = = =

" For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action against the enemy as Platoon Machine Gunner in Sea , Air , Land Team THREE (SEAL @-@ 3) , Naval Special Warfare Task Group Arabian Peninsula , Task Unit Ramadi , in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM on 9 May 2006 . Petty Officer Monsoor was the Platoon Machine Gunner of an overwatch element , providing security for an Iraqi Army Brigade during counter @-@ insurgency operations . While moving toward extraction , the Iraqi Army and Naval Special Warfare overwatch team received effective enemy automatic weapons fire resulting in one SEAL wounded in action . Immediately , Petty Officer Monsoor , with complete disregard for his own safety , exposed himself to heavy enemy fire in order to provide suppressive fire and fight his way to the wounded SEAL 's position . He continued to provide effective suppressive fire while simultaneously dragging the wounded SEAL to safety . Petty Officer Monsoor maintained suppressive fire as the wounded SEAL received tactical casualty treatment to his leg . He also helped load his wounded teammate into a High Mobility Multi @-@ Purpose Wheeled Vehicle for evacuation , then returned to combat . By his bold initiative , undaunted courage , and complete dedication to duty , Petty Officer Monsoor reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service . "

= = = = Bronze Star citation = = = =

" For heroic achievement in connection with combat operations against the enemy as Task Unit Ramadi , Iraq , Combat Advisor for Naval Special Warfare Task Group ? Arabian Peninsula in Support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM from April to September 2006 . On 11 different operations , Petty Officer Monsoor exposed himself to heavy enemy fire while shielding his teammates with suppressive fire . He aggressively stabilized each chaotic situation with focused determination and uncanny tactical awareness . Each time insurgents assaulted his team with small arms fire or rocket propelled grenades , he quickly assessed the situation , determined the best course of action to counter the enemy assaults , and implemented his plan to gain the best tactical advantage . His selfless , decisive , heroic actions resulted in 25 enemy killed and saved the lives of his teammates , other Coalition Forces and Iraqi Army soldiers . By his extraordinary guidance , zealous initiative , and total dedication to duty , Petty Officer Monsoor reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service . "

= = Legacy = =

In 2011 , the United States Department of Veterans Affairs honored Monsoor by naming one of the first three named streets at Miramar National Cemetery after him .

= = = USS Michael Monsoor (DDG 1001) = = =

In October 2008 , United States Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter announced that the second ship in the Zumwalt class of destroyers would be named USS Michael Monsoor (DDG 1001) in honor of Petty Officer Monsoor .

= = = U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps = = =

There is a U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps unit named the " Michael A. Monsoor Battalion " based in Camp Pendleton , California . The unit symbol is composed of Petty Officer Monsoor 's Medal of Honor , SEAL Trident , and Master at Arms shield . Everyone in the unit knows Petty Officer Michael A. Monsoor 's career history and shares it with all new cadets .