

GO 2022-02

GENERAL ORDERS

No. 2022-02

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, 2 February 2022

AWARD OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR
Sergeant First Class Christopher A. Celiz

On December 16, 2021, the President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, March 3, 1863, has awarded in the name of Congress the Medal of Honor to

Sergeant First Class Christopher A. Celiz
United States Army

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty:

Sergeant First Class Christopher A. Celiz distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while engaged with the enemy in Paktia Province, Afghanistan on July 12, 2018. As the leader of a special purpose unit comprised of partnered forces and members of the 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Sergeant First Class Celiz led an operation to clear an area of enemy forces and thereby disrupt future attacks against the Government of Afghanistan and allied forces. Shortly after his team reached their initial objectives, a large enemy force attacked, placing effective fire on him and his team, preventing them from maneuvering to counterattack. Realizing the danger the attack posed to his team and the operation, Sergeant First Class Celiz voluntarily exposed himself to intense enemy machine gun and small arms fire to retrieve and employ a heavy weapon system, thereby allowing U.S. and partnered forces to regain the initiative, maneuver to a secure location, and begin treatment of a critically wounded partnered force member. As the medical evacuation helicopter arrived, it was immediately engaged by accurate and sustained enemy fire. Knowing how critical it was to quickly load the casualty, Sergeant First Class Celiz willingly exposed himself to heavy enemy fire to direct and lead the evacuation. As the casualty moved from a position of cover and out into intense enemy fire, Sergeant First Class Celiz made a conscious effort to ensure his body acted as a physical shield to his team carrying the casualty and the crew of the aircraft. As the casualty was loaded and Sergeant First Class Celiz' team returned to cover, he alone remained at the aircraft, returning a high volume of fire and constantly repositioning himself to act as a physical shield to the aircraft and its crew. With his final reposition, Sergeant First Class Celiz placed himself directly between the cockpit and the enemy, ensuring the aircraft was able to depart. As the helicopter lifted off, Sergeant First Class Celiz was hit by enemy fire. Fully aware of his own injury, but understanding the peril to the aircraft from the intense enemy machine gun fire, Sergeant First Class Celiz motioned to the aircraft to depart rather than remain to load him. His selfless actions saved the life of the evacuated partnered force member and almost certainly prevented further casualties among other members of his team and the aircrew. Throughout the entire engagement, Sergeant First Class Celiz significantly changed the course of the battle by repeatedly placing himself in extreme danger to protect his team and defeat the enemy, ultimately costing him his life. Sergeant First Class Celiz' extraordinary heroism and selflessness above and beyond the call of duty were in keeping with the

