

# DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT



**COMMAND SGT. MAJ.  
JEFFREY H. RAKER**

Inducted 9 November 2011



Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey H. Raker, a native of Germany, immigrated to the United States in 1955 and enlisted in the Army as an Infantryman in January 1958. In January 1963, then Staff Sgt. Raker volunteered for Airborne School and Special Forces. Upon completion of the Special Forces Qualification Course, he was assigned to 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) on Okinawa. He conducted two six-month deployments to Vietnam, working as a light weapons leader and intelligence sergeant on Special Forces Operational Detachment-Alphas, of SFOD-A.

His follow-on assignment was to 6th Special Forces Group (Airborne) at Fort Bragg, N.C. as an SFOD-A intelligence sergeant until he volunteered for reassignment to Vietnam in January 1967. He completed his tour as the group operations sergeant, and then returned to Okinawa and the 1st SFG (A) where he was assigned as a company intelligence sergeant.

Raker's next assignment was as an instructor at the U.S. Army Special Warfare School Operations and Intelligence Course. During this assignment, he completed the Instructor Training Course as the Honor Graduate and was designated Outstanding Instructor of the Quarter. He was promoted to master sergeant, and graduated from Campbell University with a Bachelor of Science in June 1971. In 1972, Master Sgt. Raker was selected to attend the first class of the Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas. He graduated in June 1973, and was one of 10 students selected to apply for a reserve commission, an honor he respectfully declined.

He reported for duty with 1st Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group (A) at Fort Bragg, N.C., in July 1973 and was assigned as an SFOD-A operations sergeant until August 1975, then as company sergeant major until December 1976. During this period he was tasked by the battalion commander to head a team of NCOs to test the vulnerability of nuclear and chemical storage depots to penetration and terrorist interdiction.

Having been promoted to sergeant major in September 1976, Raker was assigned as detachment sergeant major of Detachment A, Berlin. Raker then reported to Fort Devens, Mass., as command sergeant major of 2nd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (A). In December 1981, Raker was assigned as command sergeant major of the United States Army Institute for Military Assistance, which soon became the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. In this position he developed the force structure for the new Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape Course, and began development of the career management field for Special Forces Soldiers.

With two years until mandatory retirement, Command Sgt. Maj. Raker requested to return to the unit where he had begun his Special Forces career, ending his 30 years of service as command sergeant major of 1st SFG(A).

His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit; Bronze Star Medal; Purple Heart Medal; Meritorious Service Medal with two oak-leaf clusters; Air Medal with one oak-leaf cluster; Army Commendation Medal with two oak-leaf clusters; Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with palm; Combat Infantryman Badge; Expert Infantryman Badge; Special Forces Tab; Master Parachutist Badge; and several foreign parachutist badges.

After his retirement from active duty, he served as senior JROTC instructor, assistant professor and associate dean for occupational education at the Guam Community College. After retiring in 1998, he concentrated on serving in various veterans organizations.