

# DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT

## SERGEANT MAJOR LOTHAR WILLIAMS

Inducted May 2015



Sergeant Major Lothar Williams was born on June 10, 1943 in Germany. He immigrated to the United States, arriving on March 3, 1960 and took up residence with his parents in Tacoma, Wash. Williams was inducted into the Army in Seattle, Wash. Following Basic Training and Advanced Infantry Training, he volunteered for airborne training in January 1962. Graduating in February 1962, he was assigned to the Airborne Battle Group, 101st Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, Ken.

In 1966, he volunteered for Special Forces training, and in April 1967 he was assigned to the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) as a Special Forces weapons specialist in Bad Toelz, Germany. In June 1968, as a staff sergeant, he transferred to the advanced element of the 10th Special Forces Group (A) to Fort Devens, Mass., where he served with ODA 226, which he remained a member of until August 1969, when he was transferred to the 5th Special Forces Group (A), located at Nha Trang, Republic of Vietnam. He received Special Forces Advanced Combat Orientation Training, and was selected, boarded, and recruited by Project Delta (Recon), Military Assistance Command, Vietnam-Studies and Observations Group. In June 1970, overall force restructuring caused Project Delta to deactivate. During his tour of duty with Project Delta, then-Sgt. 1st Class Williams received the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Golden Palm, two Bronze Stars (one with a "V" device for valor, and the second for service), a Presidential Unit Citation, as well as the Vietnamese Parachutist Badge.

In August 1971, Williams returned to the United States, and was assigned to 10th SFG(A) at Fort Devens, training unconventional warfare throughout the Continental United States and conducting UW operations in concert with European allies. Early in 1971, Sgt. 1st Class Williams volunteered for a second tour of duty with MACV-SOG, and was assigned in the Central Highlands of Vietnam at a Special Forces Forward Operating Base, where he ultimately served as company commander. Williams assumed command of the company and continued support operations for intense combat missions, which involved search-and-destroy missions and training a Montagnard company.

Following a brief assignment with conventional forces, Williams returned to the 10th SFG(A) in Bad Toelz, where he trained and advised conventional and allied forces. He then volunteered for Reserve Officer Training Command duty at the University of Washington, Pullman, Wash.

In 1980, then-Master Sgt. Williams volunteered and returned to Fort Devens, where he served as a team sergeant with ODA 226, Co. B, 2nd Bn., 10th SFG(A). In 1982, Williams volunteered for reassignment to Bad Toelz, and was in charge of all training. In the fall of 1983, Williams was promoted to sergeant major. In the spring of 1985, Sgt. Maj. Williams was selected to lead two Special Forces ODAs, which were deployed to Lebanon. The ODAs trained Christian and Muslim Lebanese Army officers in patrolling tactics, techniques and procedures. His team provided on-the-ground surveillance operations for covert monitoring of terrorist radio communications during the TWA airliner crisis.

Sgt. Maj. Williams retired in late 1987 and began a career as a Department of the Army civilian. He currently works at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School in the G4.

On June 11, 2014, Williams was awarded the Order of Saint Maurice Medal by the National Infantry Association in recognition of a long career of service to the Infantry and Special Forces Regiments.