

DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT



**MAJOR
CHESTER GARRETT**

Inducted 20 November 2016



Major Chester Garrett was born on July 19, 1941, in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands and raised in Puerto Rico. Incurring injuries, he left professional baseball and began his military career in April 1960 as an enlisted Infantryman, where his leadership abilities were quickly recognized by his superiors. Maj. Garrett was selected by his chain of command to pursue a commission through the Officer Candidate School in 1963.

After completing OCS, Maj. Garrett served in the 187th Infantry Regiment at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, from 1963 to 1964, as a rifle platoon leader and mortar platoon leader. He then completed the Special Forces Officer Course in April 1965 and was later selected as the recipient of the Brig. Gen. William O. Darby Memorial Award as the Distinguished Graduate in Ranger Class 9-70. Maj. Garrett also completed his bachelor's in business administration from the University of Nebraska in 1969.

Following his service in the Infantry, Maj. Garrett spent four tours in Vietnam receiving numerous military decorations of valor. While serving with Detachment A-341, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, he earned the Distinguished Service Cross. The citation reads:

The Distinguished Service Cross is presented to Chester Garrett, Captain (Infantry), U.S. Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Detachment A-341, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces. Captain Garrett distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on Feb. 3, 1967, while serving as Special Forces advisor to a Vietnamese strike force on a search and destroy mission near the Cambodian border.

Early in the morning, his unit was savagely attacked and pinned down by a North Vietnamese battalion firing machine guns, mortars and small arms. Completely disregarding his own safety, Capt. Garrett dashed to the point of heaviest fighting to assess the situation and coordinate the defenses. He saw an enemy position manned by four hostile soldiers placing heavy fire on his men and charged through a hail of bullets, killing the insurgents with accurate hand grenade and rifle fire. He quickly established a hasty perimeter and moved back to bring reinforcements to the forward positions. His Vietnamese counterpart was killed by the intense barrage and the men began to withdraw, but he stood up in the midst of the raging firefight and rallied his men to fight furiously against the determined attackers. Seeing two men fighting against a numerically superior element, he dashed to their side and helped kill 10 enemy soldiers within 10 meters of his position.

Supporting aircraft were unable to pinpoint his location in the dense jungle, so he moved into the open to direct them with a hand-held smoke grenade. Under cover of artillery and air strikes, he led a withdrawal to a landing zone and personally carried a wounded comrade more than six hundred meters on his back. Again, disregarding the savage fire, he led a carrying party back to the battle site and recovered all friendly casualties before leaving the area. Capt. Garrett's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

The dining facility at McGregor Range, New Mexico, was named in his honor as the Maj. Chester Garrett Dining Facility on June 4, 2014. Maj. Garrett passed away on Jan. 3, 1977.