

CORPORAL STEVEN HEIGH

163rd MI Battalion, 504th MI Brigade

CSM Doug Russell Award 2007 Recipient



CPL Steven Heigh distinguished himself through meritorious conduct and outstanding service to the US Army and the Military Intelligence (MI) Corps as the team leader of Human Intelligence (HUMINT) Collection Team (HCT) 630, C Company, 163rd MI Battalion during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM VI. CPL Heigh displayed his leadership potential early on when he was selected to fill this position, normally held by a Staff Sergeant or above, just days before moving from Kuwait into Iraq. CPL Heigh immediately took charge and moved with his team to Forward Operating Base (FOB) Caldwell. His team provided direct support to the 5/73 Cavalry Squadron, 82nd Airborne Division at this remote FOB near the Iranian border. As a Corps level HCT, he and his team had never before worked with their supported unit and the HCT he inherited was unfocused and mismanaged. Despite this, CPL Heigh quickly integrated his team into the squadron's operations and built a diverse and effective HUMINT source network from nothing.

In just the first three months of the deployment, CPL Heigh and his three-man team used their HUMINT source operations to produce 65 draft Intelligence Information Reports to meet the squadron's requirements. CPL Heigh fiercely targeted insurgent networks engaged in anti-coalition activities. His reporting led to multiple combat operations that detained a prolific Tawhid W'al-Jihad financier; identified and neutralized a Sunni insurgent training camp, and seized six substantial weapons caches containing more than 500,000 small arms rounds, 50 mortar rounds, an 82mm recoilless rifle, grenades, and artillery rounds. Additionally, CPL Heigh and his team produced intelligence that led to the seizure of a vehicle containing a large quantity of improvised explosive device (IED) making materials. CPL Heigh's collection and dissemination of accurate, actionable information enabled the squadron to take a proactive stance toward combating insurgent networks in their area and greatly contributed to the change from a reactive posture to offensive operations.

CPL Heigh's many accomplishments are all the more notable in that his area of operations encompassed all of eastern Diyala Province and was non-permissive to HUMINT collection operations. One hundred percent of HCT 630's collection was obtained from sources CPL Heigh spotted and assessed during 40 combat patrols covering nearly 2,000 miles over three months. During that time, the team was engaged four times with IEDs and sustained small arms fire. CPL Heigh and all the members of his team earned the Combat Action Badge.

Although only a Private First Class when the 163rd MI Battalion was reactivated in January 2006 and with no assigned Noncommissioned Officer, CPL Heigh recognized his own need for development in preparation for deployment. He aggressively sought resources and tirelessly studied available HUMINT and tactical skills publications. He used much of his personal time to maintain a 3/3 score on the Persian Farsi Defense Language Proficiency Test. These qualities and skills proved instrumental in his ability to effectively train his HCT, and plan and conduct the HUMINT collection mission.

CPL Heigh's supported squadron and brigade commanders commented on a regular basis as to how greatly they valued his professionalism and focus on intelligence collection that drove their operations. The 5/73 Cavalry Squadron recognized CPL Heigh and his contributions by awarding him combat spurs and the 82nd Airborne Division combat patch. Finally, HCT 630 provided reporting and tactical HUMINT support that drove a major squadron operation that resulted in approximately 60 insurgents killed in action and was featured in the 21 November 2006 Mideast edition of the *Stars and Stripes*. This recognition of CPL Heigh's achievements strongly emphasizes the relevance of HUMINT collection in the Global War on Terror.