

SPECIALIST DANIEL R. SHELDON

75th Ranger Regiment

CSM Doug Russell Award 2004 Recipient



A native of Aurora, Illinois, Daniel Sheldon attended Kaneland High School. After graduating in 1995, he moved to Chicago and attended Loyola University, majoring in Political Science with minors in History and International Studies. Graduating Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1999, he went on to obtain a Master of Arts in International Relations in 2000. He worked for two years in Chicago's government and political scene before enlisting in the Army in May 2002. SPC Sheldon was the Distinguished Honor Graduate of the 96B Intelligence Analyst course at Fort Huachuca. He then attended Airborne School where he volunteered for assignment to the 75th Ranger Regiment. After completing the Ranger Indoctrination Program, SPC Sheldon was assigned to

the All Source Production Section, Regimental MI Detachment, 75th Ranger Regiment.

As a member of the All Source Production Section, SPC Sheldon performed a myriad of duties daily. He built multiple target folders for both training and real world deployments. He analyzed multiple source information, fusing it into intelligence that the Regimental and Battalion commanders used for mission planning and battlefield decisions. When 1st Ranger Battalion conducted an off-post deployment to South Africa, SPC Sheldon was selected to take charge of the daily intelligence update to the Regimental Commander, providing him with the current situation and threat level in South Africa and the surrounding region.

SPC Sheldon's actions in combat were exemplary as well. Having only arrived at the unit two weeks earlier, SPC Sheldon deployed to Iraq from 11 March to 26 April 2003 in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF). He quickly learned his craft and provided the staff of both the Regiment and the Joint Special Operations Task Force with terrain products, Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB), and possible enemy courses of action. His ability to collect intelligence and articulate the enemy situation was

remarkable. Although he was the most junior analyst at the time, SPC Sheldon's performance convinced the detachment leadership to select him to give the intelligence update at the nightly Regimental Tactical Operations Center (TOC) briefing. His maturity and ability to comprehend the volatile situation in Iraq made him a very effective briefer.

Upon returning stateside from OIF, SPC Sheldon continued to support Rangers who were forward deployed by providing target folders on specific locations in the area of operations while at the same time preparing to attend the grueling Army Ranger Course. From July to November 2003, SPC Sheldon attended the Pre-Ranger and Ranger Courses, earning the coveted Ranger Tab. This is a huge accomplishment for any Soldier, made even more unusual by his short time in service and only eight months with the unit at the time.

Shortly after completing Ranger school, SPC Sheldon deployed to Afghanistan to meet up with the rest of the Regiment which was already involved in combat operations in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF). SPC Sheldon quickly assumed a role as a lead analyst and was placed in the future operations cell. He played an intricate role in the development of numerous target packets for areas where Rangers would later conduct combat operations. SPC Sheldon also displayed the willingness and ability to lead, direct, and assist other analysts in the detachment.

SPC Sheldon was deployed a third time in support of the the Global War on Terror when he was nominated for this award. He was hand-picked to take over as the targeting NCO for the Joint Special Operations Task Force in Afghanistan.