THEY SERVED IN SILENCE

The Story of a Cryptologic Hero
SGT Christopher L. Muniz, USA

"The end product of intelligence is success in war. "
Angelo Codevilla, PhD

SGT Christopher Muniz hailed from the small and close knit hamlet of New Cuyama in beautiful Santa Barbara County, California. The town lies within the shadow of the majestic Los Padres National Forest.

Early on Chris showed a talent for athletics, particularly football. During the 2006-2007 season, he was a starter at both the fullback and linebacker positions at Cuyama Valley High School. After graduation, he attended Santa Barbara County's Allan Hancock Community College where he would continue to excel in the sport. In November 2008, however, a shoulder injury would bring his playing days to a close, and he would decide to leave both college and the gridiron behind to join the United States Army.

After extensive training to prepare for his work as a signals intelligence analyst, he was assigned to the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, the 25th Infantry Division based in Hawaii. The 25th Infantry's moniker is "Tropic Lighting." Since its inception in the early days of World War II, the unit has more than lived up to its name in places such as Guadalcanal, Luzon, Pusan, Pleiku, and Kuwait City. December 2011 would find this brigade of the storied division in Afghanistan.

Throughout its long history, the United States Army, in time of war, has depended on its Soldiers to carry the fight to the enemy. The infantry is, and has always been, the "Queen of Battle." However, it is also the case that those who fight our Nation's wars must not only have the ability to shoot, move, and communicate, but also to determine enemy plans and intentions. This is true today and has been true in the past. In the end, the ability to gather critical information in combat not only helps you win but also saves lives. It was to this end that Chris dedicated his life.

On December 11th, SGT Muniz's unit was on a mission in Afghanistan when he and another Soldier would lose their lives after being fatally injured by an improvised explosive device. He would leave behind a loving wife and family. For his service to

his Nation, he would be posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, NATO Medal, and the Combat Action Badge.

On December 23, the fallen warrior returned home. At the Bakersfield, California airfield a group of veterans would render "flag honors" and provide a motorcycle escort for his family to his burial site. Many friends and family that day would draw on their memories of SGT Christopher Muniz.

His former football coach, Biff Charlton, noted that, "I knew him very well. He was like a second son to me… an all around wonderful kid… and a true leader." Others would recall him as "loyal, hardworking, and a Soldier in every sense of the word." His wife, Lindsay, remembered him as "someone who had a passionate devotion to his family and Nation and was always striving to go above and beyond the norm."

President Ronald Reagan, a man who, like Chris, spent many wonderful days in Santa Barbara County, once noted, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same." In his short but meaningful life, SGT Christopher Muniz bravely and courageously took up the fight for freedom for his generation and, in doing so, left behind a legacy of service, sacrifice, dedication, and hope that will never be forgotten.

SGT Christopher L. Muniz
United States Army
June 24, 1987 – December 11, 2011

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