

# DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT

## COLONEL ROGER H.C. DONLON

Inducted 10 April 2008



Colonel Roger Donlon was born and raised in Saugerties, N.Y. His military career began with enlisted service in both the Air Force and Army. Commissioned through Officer Candidate School as an Infantry Officer in 1959, he spent the next 29 years serving in assignments based on a triad of his specialties as an Infantry, Special Forces and Foreign Area Officer.

Notable among his many assignments: detachment commander, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) in Vietnam; Commandant, Advanced Combat Training Academy in Korea; District Senior Advisor in Vietnam; Advisor to the Royal Thai Army in Bangkok, Thailand; and battalion commander, 3rd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) in Panama.

Colonel Donlon became the first American Soldier to be presented the Medal of Honor in Vietnam, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his own life above and beyond the call of duty on July 6, 1964. His awards and decorations include: The Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with palm, the Combat Infantry Badge and the Parachutist Badge.

Colonel Donlon's military and civilian education includes: The Special Warfare Course; Command and General Staff College; and the Army War College. COL Donlon received a bachelor of arts from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and a master of science in government from Campbell University.

Colonel Donlon is the current Honorary Colonel of the Special Forces Regiment. He is also the author of *Beyond Nam Dong*, a self-published autobiography.

Since his retirement from Active Duty, Colonel Donlon has continued to represent the Special Forces Regiment over the past 20 years by serving as an advisor and mentor to Special Forces students at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He also serves as a guest instructor, mentor and guest speaker at the Special Forces Qualification Course. He routinely visits and participates in numerous Special Forces Qualification Course graduations each year. Colonel Donlon's work with the Special Forces Regiment, coupled with his Active Duty service, represent over 49 years of commitment to the Special Forces.

COL Donlon and his wife, Norma, have been married for over 40 years. They have five children and 11 grandchildren.