



Biographical Sketch

U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE, FORT BRAGG, NC 28310 910-432-6005

MASTER SGT. JAMES W. PONDER, III

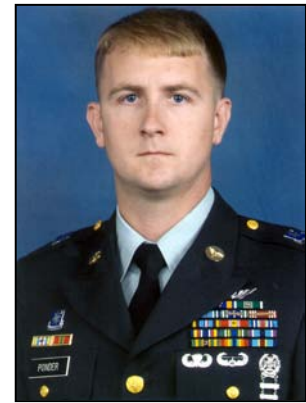
Killed in action on June 28, 2005

Operation Enduring Freedom

Master Sgt. James “Tre” Ponder died June 28, 2005, in eastern Afghanistan when his MH-47D helicopter was shot down by enemy fire during combat operations.

He was born June 24, 1969 in Alabama, and was a native of Clarksville, Tenn.

Ponder joined the Army in March 1990 as a Chinook helicopter repairer. After graduating from Basic Training, Fort Eustis, Va., he was assigned to Camp Humphries, Korea. He arrived at the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne) in December, 1992, and served in a variety of positions, including 2nd Battalion, 160th Flight Engineer instructor, 2nd Bn. Standardization Instructor, and Regiment Standardization Instructor. This was his fourth rotation to Afghanistan.



Ponder’s military schools include: the Primary Leadership Development Course, the Combat Lifesavers Course, the Survival Evasion Resistance and Escape Course, the Basic Noncommissioned Officers Course, the Equal Opportunity Representative Course, the Air Assault, Airborne, and the Army Advanced Noncommissioned Officers Course.

His awards and decorations include: the Air Medal for valor, the Air Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Joint Service Achievement Medal, the Valorous Unit Award, the Army Superior Unit Award, the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Korean Defense Service Medal, the Humanitarian Service Medal, and the Overseas Service Ribbon. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, and the Air Medal for valor.

Ponder is survived by his wife Leslie of Clarksville, Tenn., and two daughters, Samantha, and Elizabeth.

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