SGT. JOEL DAVID CLARKSON
Died on March 16, 2010
Operation Enduring Freedom

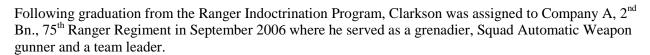Sgt. Joel David Clarkson, 23, was a team leader assigned to 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. He was born on Oct. 8, 1986.

Clarkson was seriously wounded during a fierce direct-fire combat engagement against a heavily armed and determined enemy in Farah Province, Afghanistan, March 13. He was treated by unit medics, immediately evacuated to the nearest medical treatment facility and subsequently transferred to Landsthul Regional Hospital, Landsthul, Germany where he died March 16. He was on his fifth deployment in support of the War on Terror with three previous deployments to Iraq and one to Afghanistan.

Clarkson enlisted in the U.S. Army from his hometown of Fairbanks, Alaska in February 2006. He completed One Station Unit Training at Fort Benning, Ga., as an infantryman. After graduating from the Basic Airborne Course there, he was assigned to the Ranger Indoctrination Program also at Fort Benning.

Following graduation from the Ranger Indoctrination Program, Clarkson was assigned to Company A, 2nd Bn., 75th Ranger Regiment in September 2006 where he served as a grenadier, Squad Automatic Weapon gunner and a team leader.

His military education includes the Basic Airborne Course, Ranger Indoctrination Program, U.S. Army Ranger Course, Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape Course, and the Warrior Leader Course.

His awards and decorations include the Ranger Tab, the Combat Infantryman Badge, Expert Infantryman Badge, Parachutist Badge, Army Commendation Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with combat star, Iraq Campaign Medal with combat star, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Non-Commissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon and the Overseas Service Ribbon.

Clarkson was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star Medal and the Army Commendation Medal.

He is survived by his wife Cassandra and their son, Orion of Norfolk, Va.; his parents, Karen and Steven Clarkson of Fairbanks, Ala., and his older sister, Jessica.

– RANGERS LEAD THE WAY! –