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Staff Sgt. Emil Rivera-Lopez 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne)

Staff Sergeant Emil Rivera-Lopez, a UH-60 Black Hawk Helicopter Repairer, assigned to 3rd Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), died August 25, 2017, during a training mission off the southern coast of Yemen.

Rivera-Lopez, 31, a native of San Juan, Puerto Rico, joined the U.S. Army, July 18, 2006. He attended Basic Combat Training, Fort Jackson, South Carolina, followed by Advanced Individual Training, Fort Eustis, Virginia.

He began his service with D Company, 3rd Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade from March 2007 to September 2008. Following his assignment with D Co., he served as a crew chief with the 3-82nd MEDEVAC Company until May 2013.

Upon completion of Night Stalker Enlisted Green Platoon, where he was recognized as the Distinguished Honor Graduate, Rivera-Lopez was assigned to D Company, 3rd Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia, as an MH-60M maintainer and squad leader. In November 2014, he was reassigned to C Company, 3rd Battalion as a section sergeant and MH-60M Crew Chief.

Rivera-Lopez was a combat veteran with multiple deployments in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Inherent Resolve.

Rivera-Lopez's military education includes the Basic Leader Course, Advanced Leader Course, Night Stalker Enlisted Green Platoon (Honor Graduate), the Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE) High Risk (Level C) Course, MH-60 Maintainer Course, MH-60 Non-rated Crewmember Course, Dunker, and Airborne School.

His awards and decorations include the Air Medal (Numeral 2), Army Commendation Medal ("V" Device), Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal (2 OLC), Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Army Good Conduct Medal (3), National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal (3 Bronze Service Stars), Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, NCO Professional Development Ribbon (Numeral 2), Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, NATO Medal, Combat Action Badge, Aviation Badge, and Parachutist Badge.

He was posthumously awarded the Meritorious Service Medal and Senior Aviation Badge.



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