

# DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT



**MASTER SERGEANT  
CHARLES E. HOSKING JR.**

Inducted 20 November 2016



Master Sergeant Charles E. Hosking Jr. was born on May 12, 1924, in Ramsey, New Jersey. He left high school early to join the Canadian Army so he could fight in World War II, until his age was discovered and he was sent back. He attended Ramsey High School and when he was 17, he left before graduating to enter the U.S. Army during World War II.

During World War II, he was assigned to the 509th Parachute Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division, and was a participant in the Battle of the Bulge.

Master Sgt. Hosking missed duty in the Korean War due to a bazooka training accident that broke both of his legs and left him with numerous shrapnel wounds. He joined the Green Berets in the early 1960s, serving as a member of the Special Forces in Bad Tolz, Germany, during the Cold War. He began the first of three tours of duty in Vietnam in 1961. In addition to being a demolitions expert, he was proficient in many languages, including Vietnamese.

On March 21, 1967, at the age of 42, MSgt. Hosking was killed in action. Due to his valiant actions on that day, he was awarded the Medal of Honor. His citation reads:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Master Sgt. Hosking, then-sergeant first class, Detachment A-302, Company A, greatly distinguished himself while serving as company advisor in the III Corps Civilian Irregular Defense Group Reaction Battalion during combat operations in Don Luan District. A Viet Cong suspect was apprehended and subsequently identified as a Viet Cong sniper.

While Master Sgt. Hosking was preparing the enemy for movement back to the base camp, the prisoner suddenly grabbed a hand grenade from Master Sgt. Hosking's belt, armed the grenade and started running towards the company command group which consisted of two Americans and two Vietnamese who were standing a few feet away. Instantly realizing that the enemy intended to kill the other men, Master Sgt. Hosking immediately leaped upon the Viet Cong soldier's back. With utter disregard for his personal safety, he grasped the Viet Cong in a "Bear Hug" forcing the grenade against the enemy soldier's chest. He then wrestled the Viet Cong to the ground and covered the enemy's body with his body until the grenade detonated.

The blast instantly killed both Master Sgt. Hosking and the Viet Cong. By absorbing the full force of the exploding grenade with his body and that of the enemy, he saved the other members of his command group from death or serious injury.

Master Sgt. Hosking's risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty are in the highest tradition of the U.S. Army and reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces.

Hosking Physical Fitness Center on Fort Bragg, North Carolina, was memorialized in his honor.