

GENERAL ORDERS

No. 24

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, 23 April 1970

AWARD OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR



By direction of the President, under the Joint Resolution of Congress approved 12 July 1862 (amended by act of 3 March 1863, act of 9 July 1918 and act of 25 July 1963), the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty is awarded posthumously by the Department of the Army in the name of Congress to:



Specialist Four *Hector Santiago-Colon*, , United States Army, who distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the cost of his life on 28 June 1968 while serving as a gunner in the mortar platoon of Company B, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) in Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam. On this date, while serving as a perimeter sentry, Specialist *Santiago-Colon* heard distinct movement in the heavily wooded area to his front and flanks. Immediately he alerted his fellow-sentries in the area to move to their foxholes and remain alert for any enemy probing forces. From the wooded area around his position heavy enemy automatic weapons and small arms fire suddenly broke out, but extreme darkness rendered difficult the precise location and identification of the hostile force. Only the muzzle flashes from enemy weapons indicated their position. Specialist *Santiago-Colon* and the other members of his position immediately began to repel the attackers, utilizing hand grenades, anti-personnel mines and small arms fire. Due to the heavy volume of enemy fire and exploding grenades around them, a North Vietnamese soldier was able to crawl, undetected, to their position. Suddenly, the enemy soldier lobbed a hand grenade into Specialist *Santiago-Colon's* foxhole. Realizing that there was no time to throw the grenade out of his position, Specialist *Santiago-Colon* retrieved the grenade, tucked it into his stomach and, turning away from his comrades, absorbed the full impact of the blast. His heroic self-sacrifice saved the lives of those who occupied the foxhole with him, and provided them with the inspiration to continue fighting until they had forced the enemy to retreat from the perimeter. By his conspicuous gallantry at the cost of his own life in the highest traditions of the military service, Specialist Four *Hector Santiago-Colon* has reflected great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.



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By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

Official:

KENNETH G. WICKHAM,
Major General, United States Army,
The Adjutant General.

W. C. WESTMORELAND,
General, United States Army,
Chief of Staff.

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