

“Private First Class Joshua R. Pallotta, United States Army, heroically distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous conduct in the face of enemy of the United States as a Mortarman, Company A, 3d Battalion, 172d Infantry Regiment (Mountain), COP Herrera, Paktya, Afghanistan on 22 August 2010, during Operation Enduring Freedom. At approximately 1145 hours on 22 August, PFC Pallotta’s platoon was ambushed near Mulla fatee village, Paktya Province, killing one U.S. Soldier, an Afghan Border Policeman and wounding two other ABP. The mortar team of PFC Pallotta and SPC Gubic, moved to cover the evacuation of the casualties. When the platoon began the evacuation of the casualties, they were attacked a second time and another U.S. Soldier was killed and one wounded. The platoon was taking fire from a river bed 300 meters away and a mountaintop roughly 500 meters away being engaged by at least three enemy machine gun teams and two rocket propelled grenade teams. PFC Pallotta, serving as the Assistant Gunner for the mortar team, engaged targets with his M4 rifle until he was told to move up into a position to engage the enemy with the 60MM mortar. With utter disregard for his own safety, PFC Pallotta moved into the open and loaded rounds into the tube for the mortar team gunner, SPC Gubic. PFC Pallotta continued to prep and load rounds into the tube so his gunner could engage targets, all the while taking enemy fire with rounds landing next to and in front of their position. PFC Pallotta called out targets for his gunner and assisted with ranging the targets and calling out the most dangerous threats. PFC Pallotta helped direct the mortar gunner in eliminating a machine gun team, an RPG team, and dispersing a squad sized element of dismounted troops in the river bed. The platoon was then able to break contact and move down the hill towards the Casualty Collection Point. PFC Pallotta proceeded to pull rear security taking cover behind a small berm, continuing to engage

targets with his M4 while the element collected the casualties. As the casualties were being moved downhill, PFC Pallotta broke cover and ran to a litter and assisted with moving the casualty to a secure casualty collection site. The platoon came under fire again while moving the casualties from heavy machine gun fire and more RPG's. PFC Pallotta again exposed himself to enemy fire in order to engage targets with his rifle. This directly allowed for the litter teams to move the casualties to the CCP. PFC Pallotta continued to provide covering fire as the rest of the element moved to the CCP, making himself one of the last to enter the safety of the building serving as the CCP. Once inside the CCP, PFC Pallotta moved to a position where he could provide security for the flank of the element. PFC Pallotta's actions that day demonstrated bravery and ability to act under fire and he greatly helped this platoon break contact with the enemy to evacuate the wounded and killed. PFC Pallotta's bravery and ability to act under fire is without a doubt inspiring and upholds the finest traditions of the Task Force Avalanche, 3rd Battalion, 172d Infantry (Mountain), Task Force Rakkasan, and the United States Army. "