

HEROES

In the War on Terror

Each week the Defense Dept. highlights the military men and women who have gone above and beyond in the global war on terror.



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San Jose, Calif.
Distinguished Flying Cross
recipient

Air Force Maj. Kim N. Campbell

The A-10 Warthog may be one of the slowest, ugliest planes in the Air Force, but it's the best friend a soldier or Marine could have in a close fight. And it's the last thing an enemy ever wants to see – especially if the pilot's call sign stands for "Killer Chick."

On April 7, 2003, then-Capt. Campbell and her flight lead responded to a call for air support in downtown Baghdad, where an elite unit of the Iraqi Republican Guard had U.S. forces pinned against the Tigris River. Campbell and her wingman faced bad weather before they dove out of the sky and devastated the enemy with rockets and the Warthog's feared 30mm Gatling gun. After successfully hitting their targets, the pilots turned back toward base – and that's when Campbell's jet was rocked by a large explosion, and immediately began pulling to the left and toward the ground. With numerous caution lights flashing, the one that worried Campbell the most was the hydraulic lights. A quick check confirmed her suspicions: Her hydraulic system had been fried. She would later discover that one of her engines was badly damaged and the fuselage was riddled with hundreds of bullet holes.

Campbell quickly switched to manual inversion, allowing her to fly her Warthog under mechanical control. She then had a decision: try to fly 300 miles back to base, or parachute into hostile territory. This was dicey terrain, so she decided she had to make the flight. Despite the heavily damaged aircraft and terrible weather – including massive dust storms – "Killer Chick" persevered. With the help of a seasoned pilot on her wing, Campbell landed safely back at base – fully prepared to take to the skies again and unleash the Warthog, as well as her moniker, on any opposing forces.

For her actions and bravery, Campbell was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for Heroism. Air Force [story](#); Distinguished Flying Cross Society [profile](#).

Army Col. Michael E. Stout

There's an old saying that a small idea is the birthplace of great accomplishments. For Col. Stout, who was deployed to Afghanistan from September 2002 to April 2003, that small idea was the realization that rebuilding the war-torn country would require a joint effort by the military, civilians, members of the community, and local organizations. His idea has grown into one of the central components of the war efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan: the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), deployed throughout the host nation to rebuild and revitalize infrastructure and institutions.

In Afghanistan, Stout met with military commanders, civilian leaders, U.S. interagency members, and Afghan Ministry officials – and slowly his recommendations crystallized. He created the first three PRTs – in Gardez, Bamyán, and Kunduz – by conducting a thorough analysis of the provinces and towns, and then securing the support and resources necessary to make a tangible impact. The PRTs in those three areas are still carrying out their work – and also offering an opportunity for other nations to help the Afghans. Today, the Bamyán PRT is led by New Zealand, and the Kunduz PRT is led by Germany, with support from Belgium, France, Hungary, the Netherlands, Romania, and Switzerland.

Stout's initial model played a key role in shaping both the Department of Defense's and U.S. Central Command's approaches to conducting future reconstruction operations. For his leadership and contributions in Afghanistan, Stout was awarded the Defense Superior Service Medal on Dec. 13, 2006.



Reading, Penn.
Defense Superior Service
Medal recipient