"Above the Best"

Army Aviation Hall of Fame Inductee, 2 April 1998

SFC Louis R. Rocco, a member of Advisory Team 162, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, was awarded the American Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty northeast of Katum, 24 May 1970.

SFC Rocco distinguished himself when he volunteered to accompany a medical evacuation team on an urgent mission to evacuate eight critically wounded Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) personnel. As the helicopter approached the landing zone, it became the target for intense enemy automatic weapons fire. Disregarding his own safety SFC Rocco identified and placed accurate suppressive fire on the enemy positions as the aircraft descended toward the landing zone. Sustaining major damage from the enemy fire, the aircraft was forced to crash land causing SFC Rocco to sustain a fractured wrist and hip and a severely bruised back. Ignoring the injuries, he extracted the pilots and crewman from

Despite intense enemy fire, SFC Rocco carried each unconscious man across approximately 20 meters of exposed terrain to the ARVN perimeter. On each trip his severely burned hands and broken wrist caused excruciating pain but the lives of the unconscious crash survivors were more important than his personal discomfort and he continued his rescue efforts. Once inside the friendly position, SFC Rocco helped administer first aid to his wounded comrades until his

wounds and burns caused him to collapse and lose consciousness. His bravery under fire and intense devotion to duty were directly responsible for saving three of his fellow soldiers from certain death. His unparalleled bravery in the face of enemy fire, his complete disregard for his own pain and injuries and his performance were far above and beyond the call of duty and in keeping with the highest tradition of the military service. They reflect great credit on himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.