



Runnemedede, NJ  
Silver Star

## STAFF SERGEANT LINCOLN V. DOCKERY

Staff Sgt. Lincoln V. Dockery said he didn't even see the grenade that sent shrapnel into his right forearm while charging insurgent fighters in Afghanistan's Korengal valley, Nov. 16, 2007.

"Someone yelled out," he said. "My hand went up and a hot, sharp feeling went through."

Dockery, a combat engineer then assigned to a route clearance patrol with Company A of the 173rd Airborne Brigade's Special Troops Battalion, said he decided the injury wasn't major, and continued his charge up a hill into enemy fire.

"I don't want to think about what would have happened had he not been there," said Capt. William Cromie, Dockery's platoon leader that day in Afghanistan. "It would have been a completely different day."

Dockery said the description of the mission for which the patrol departed from Forward Operating Base Asadabad in Kunar Province that day sounded like the description of their mission for any other day: "Out looking for bombs."

"My only concern was for the guys who worked under me," the 25-year-old stated.

His concern became reality when the lead vehicle on the mission, a Husky mine-detecting vehicle, activated an improvised explosive device. Rocket-propelled grenades immediately started hitting the damaged vehicle and it became clear the convoy was in the middle of an ambush.

With RPGs coming at his men and him from two different directions, he realized that the enemy was not only across a nearby river, but also about 20 meters from their position. He had to make a quick decision.

"If we didn't assault the hill they were attacking from, they would have taken us out. They couldn't miss with their weapons they were so close," Dockery recalled.

He checked on the lead vehicle's driver who was barely conscious but not wounded. Pfc. Amador Magana managed to give a thumbs-up, Dockery said, and soon stood up, manned his M-249 machine gun and returned fire on the enemy.

Dockery and one of his Soldiers, Spc. Corey Taylor, then stormed the hill as their team members provided support from the convoy. During the charge Dockery was injured, but he kept going, through hand grenade exchanges and incoming RPGs.



# HEROES

The pair low-crawled the rest of the way up, watching bullets kick up rocks and dirt all around them. They then pushed the enemy back from their position and found the IED command detonator and wire.

Indirect fire, air strikes and other close air support was called in later to deal with about 30 fleeing fighters, but Dockery's assault kept everyone else from the patrol alive.

Dockery received the Purple Heart for his injury in combat and earned a Silver Star for valor. Both medals were presented on March 11 in Bamberg, Germany.

"Hopefully anybody would have done the same thing I did that day," Dockery said, downplaying his role in the event.

*Excerpts from article by Sgt. Micah E. Clare, U.S. Army Europe  
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