

Air Force Staff Sgt. Jason A. Kimberling

**Rathdrum, ID
Bronze Star with "V" recipient**

On a sweltering 115-degree day in August 2006, Staff Sgt. Jason A. Kimberling was part of a 3-person security force assigned to a convoy of 15 Afghan National Police (ANP) officers and 20 members of the Afghan National Army (ANA).

A highway checkpoint in Qalat Province had come under attack, and the convoy was sent to assist. As Kimberling's convoy searched for the enemy, they were attacked by more than 100 well-trained, well-equipped Taliban fighters. The coordinated ambush began with a rocket propelled grenade (RPG) that landed only about 5 yards away. After several RPG rounds had been fired from a base about 325 yards away, a barrage of machine gun fire began to spray the group from only about 55 yards away and came from a different direction.

The driver of the security forces Humvee, a fellow airman, created cover with the vehicle, allowing Kimberling to jump out and return fire. Their position was hit by an RPG that knocked down Kimberling and his driver. As Kimberling was recovering from the blast, he saw two enemy gunmen heading toward them from a house just 35 yards away – from a third direction. Kimberling exposed himself to gunfire to kill the two gunmen. His actions allowed the ANP and ANA members to regroup, killing additional enemy fighters.

Soon another round of shooting began from enemy fighters, and Kimberling did not hesitate to move from his protected position in order to return fire, giving an ANA soldier the opportunity to successfully throw a hand grenade into the enemy's position.

The convoy was then able to move away from the ambush site and onto higher ground, though still under enemy fire. Kimberling exposed himself a third time to enemy fire so that he could use a satellite phone to communicate with the tactical operations center to coordinate air support that eventually ended the battle and allowed the convoy to return to base.

"And if all of that wasn't enough, during the attack, Sergeant Kimberling had the situational awareness to call in close-air support from nearby Dutch NATO aircraft that were patrolling the area," said Col. Thomas Laffey, 366th Mission Support Group commander. "He achieved this while under very heavy fire for more than two hours."

An estimated 20 enemy combatants were killed in the firefight, without a single casualty among the security forces, ANA or ANP. Kimberling was awarded a Bronze Star with Valor and the Army Commendation Medal for his actions.



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