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Senate

COMMENDING BILL ANTON

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize a brave American, William Anton. As a man of remarkable courage, strength, and conviction, Bill is receiving an extraordinary honor in the U.S. Army Ranger community by being inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame. Bill will go down in the history books as the first Nevadan to ever receive this recognition.

As the son of an Army officer, Bill found his choice to continue the family tradition quite natural, but fate was needed to further solidify his commitment.

An ROTC scholarship to the University of Nebraska put Bill on the football team, but a football-ending knee injury put Bill right where he was supposed to be, as a fulltime Army cadet. Bill was soon promoted to cadet major general, making him the highest ranking ROTC cadet in the United States with over 20,000 cadets under his command.

According to Bill, life has been a constant pursuit of challenging endeavors saying, "In everything I've done, I always wanted to challenge myself to see if I could accomplish the most demanding tasks or courses—whether it was in the Army or in my academic pursuits."

And challenge himself he did. As a defender of our Nation's freedom in the Vietnam war, Bill guided the most decorated combat Ranger unit in Vietnam, Company H, Ranger, 75th Infantry, Airborne. While Vietnam was seen as a controversial war back home, Bill's role to defend freedom was never a doubt in his mind.

Bill joined the Rangers because they are one of the toughest military organizations in our Nation's history, and as a member of the Ranger Hall of Fame, history will remember Bill as one of our greatest warriors. For it was the Rangers that accomplished some of the most demanding and impossible tasks, and as a member of this elite group of soldiers, Bill exemplified their requirements of high intellect, physical strength, stamina, and bravery.

Bill's own words describe him the best: "My entire career was full of fond memories. I sought demanding assignments to challenge myself. Serving my country as a professional soldier and Officer is the highest form of public service. It is full of selfless duty and devotion to our nation—defense of our people and the supreme document—the Constitution. When we take our oath, it is to the Constitution first, then the President, and then to the other officers appointed over us. This is not lost on any Officer or soldier."

When asked what Bill would like the world to remember about his fallen comrades, he had this to say: "The American military fights only when diplomacy fails. We enforce the policies of our great nation. Our fallen comrades do not die in vain. They are remembered by their comrades, families, and most of the citizens of our great nation."

We all know that Bill Anton is an extraordinary soldier, but now America will know that above all else, he is an American that truly embodies the spirit and freedom of this great Nation.