

**Justification Narrative for PMA Hall of Fame**  
**MAJ James E. Smith, Jr.**  
**PMA Class 56**

MAJ James Smith graduated from the University of South Carolina School of Law in 1995 and received a direct commission to the JAG Corps in 1996. Seriously affected by 9/11 tragedy, he requested a transfer to a Combat Arms Branch. He was informed if he wished to be an Infantry Officer, he would have to resign his commission, enlist in the Army (South Carolina Army National Guard), graduate from Basic Training, graduate from the Palmetto Military Academy (PMA), and graduate from Infantry Officer Basic Course (IOBC) at Ft. Benning. Quite an arduous task for a young man, but it should be noted that MAJ Smith was 37 years old when he attended Basic Training; old enough to be the father of most of his contemporaries.

MAJ Smith graduated from Basic Training and attended PMA, graduating with Class 56 in 2005. IOBC at Ft. Benning is an arduous school that demands mental acuity and tip-top physical conditioning. All of this is absolutely incredible for a 37 year-old man to complete. If he failed at any point, his military career was over; this was quite a leap of faith and MAJ Smith did this all in order to place himself in harms-way and serve his state and country in combat.

On 8 March 2008, while serving with the 205<sup>th</sup> RPAC(S) in Kharboland, Zabual Province, Afghanistan, then Captain Smith earned the Purple Heart for wound received while being personally engaged by the enemy. Others awards include the Combat Infantry Badge, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Global War of Terrorism Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, and many others.

James is a true Patriot and wounded combat Veteran. His bravery and commitment are unchallenged and he is most deserving of this prestigious honor.



Larry J. Saunders, Jr.  
MP, SCARNG  
PMA Class 47