



MARINE CORPS SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION
INDIANA CHAPTER

29TH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT



In Honor of

SGT. JOHN K. RANKEL

THURSDAY

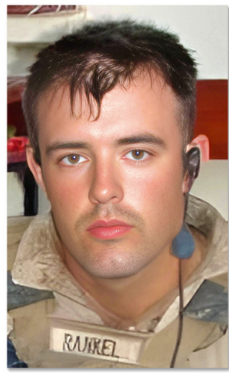
SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

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Sergeant John Kenneth Rankel was born on July 28, 1986 in Anderson, IN, to Trisha Stockhoff and Kevin Rankel.

John displayed an affinity toward equipment and the military at a very young age. His favorite sports were sports that required equipment (football and baseball). He also loved GI Joes and had quite a collection of both the miniature and larger figures.

John attended Speedway schools during his elementary years, moved to the Center Grove schools for his middle school years and returned to Speedway for his junior and senior years, graduating from Speedway High School in 2005. Throughout school, he was a very good student, but like a lot of teenagers tended to “slack off” a bit in his early high school years. Returning to Speedway, he began to realize again the importance of academics and finished high school with an overall GPA of 3.5.

He was heavily involved in athletics his entire life, playing little league baseball, bantam football and youth basketball. He even tried competitive swimming for a time as well as wrestling. He began to realize in 8th grade that he could excel in football and began a serious effort to become a defensive and offensive lineman the following summer. He played for both Center Grove and the Speedway football teams (two schools with big football traditions) and won all-state honorable mention at the end of his junior year. In addition to football, he decided during his senior year in high school to try out for both the Speedway basketball and baseball teams. He made both, and although not a star for either, made significant contributions to each team in the area of senior leadership.

John was a freshman in high school when the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 took place. This day had a profound impact on him although he did not display this outwardly. He broached the subject of joining the military to his parents a few times after 9/11, but they resisted,

any serious discussions, re-directing the conversation to college choices. This did not detract him however, as he pursued discussions with USMC recruiters, with serious discussions taking place during the first semester of his senior year came to a close. Despite his parents' reservations, he signed enlistment papers to join the U.S. Marine Corps on December 27, 2004.

Following graduation, he jumped on a bus on August 8, 2005 to San Diego for boot camp. Some three months later he graduated boot camp



with honors, being promoted to Private First Class. From boot camp, he attended the School of Infantry and several other military courses before he deployed with the 1/4 Marines of Iraq in 2007 as a part Operation Iraqi Freedom. His superiors during this tour recall a mature young man wanting to do whatever it took to make himself and his fellow Marines better. As a result, this newly promoted corporal was assigned to be the crew leader of a Humvee, which was relatively unheard of for someone without combat experience. John performed admirably in this role.

He deployed once more to Iraq in 2008, as a member of a sniper team. Once in country, he learned there were more sniper teams than was

necessary; as a result his role in his last Iraqi deployment was more of a support function. This caused him to be a bit disillusioned to the point where he was considering leaving the Marine Corps at the end of his four year enlistment. However, the dream of becoming an infantry squad leader was still on his mind, and he re-enlisted in 2009, with the understanding he would redeploy with the 1/4 Marines to Afghanistan. Shortly after re-enlistment , John was promoted to Sergeant at the age of 23.

Shortly after re-enlisting, Sergeant Rankel learned that the 1/4 Marines would not be deploying to Afghanistan as originally planned. Therefore he set out to seek a transfer to a unit that would be deploying, and was re-assigned to 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force in December of 2009.

Although the 3/1 Marines had already begun their training for their upcoming mission, they welcomed Sergeant Rankel and immediately recognized the talents and skills he would bring to the unit. He received excellent fitness reports from his commanding officers after serving only a short time with 3/1. He was also assigned a rifle squad which was his ultimate goal when he joined the Marines-he wanted to lead men.

On June 7, 2010, Sgt. Rankel was leading two rifle squads when the lead unit came under enemy ambush. He ran 600 meters to come to the aid of the lead unit, who were pinned down with only a few haystacks for cover. Sgt. Rankel led an aggressive effort to return fire and therefore prevented the unit from being overwhelmed by a much larger enemy force. Upon being ordered to fall back to allow an artillery assault on the enemy position, he selflessly remained at the area of attack, ordering his fellow Marines to fall back while he provided covering fire. With all of his fellow Marines out of immediate danger, he himself attempted to fall back when he was mortally wounded.

For his actions that day, Sgt. Rankel received the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star with Valor. He has also received the Afghanistan Campaign Medal as well as the NATO Defense Medal posthumously. Other awards John earned included multiple Combat Action Ribbons, the Marine Corp Good Conduct Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, and the Global War on Terrorism and National Defense Service Medals during his first tour as well as three individual Certificates of Commendation. He was posthumously inducted into the Indiana Military Veterans Hall of Fame in 2018.



Sgt. Rankel is buried in the Field of Valor at Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis.

TO REGISTER
www.mcsf.org/indiana
or download a registration form here:
mcsf-ind.sgtstrader.org/forms/2024RegistrationForm.pdf

EVENT SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

10:00am

Check-In / Registration

11:30am

Opening Ceremonies

NOON

Shotgun Start
Let's Play Golf!

5:00pm

Dinner

6:00pm

Awards
Closing Ceremonies
Ball Drop

Proceeds from this year's golf tournament will be donated to the Sergeant John K. Ranel Memorial Scholarship through the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation.

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