

CITATION TO ACCOMPANY THE AWARD OF

THE SILVER STAR

TO

ISMAEL VILLEGAS

Technical Sergeant Ismael Villegas distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an armed enemy of the United States near Bagh Khosak, Afghanistan on 24 September 2009. On that date, Sergeant Villegas was the sole Joint Terminal Attack Controller for his Army Special Forces team during a 16-hour firefight. Sergeant Villegas was part of a three-man dismounted element clearing explosive devices from the road when the enemy initiated an ambush with a remote controlled explosive device. The explosion was followed by accurate and intense heavy machine gun fire from nearby high terrain. Quickly identifying that his team members were pinned down in the enemy kill zone, Sergeant Villegas under direct enemy fire, charged 200 feet across an open, un-cleared improvised explosive device minefield to a more effective support-by-fire position and immediately returned fire with his personal weapon. Voluntarily, without hesitation, and at great personal risk, Sergeant Villegas repeatedly exposed himself to direct enemy fire in order to suppress the enemy attack and protect his teammates. He coordinated targets with the command element, and continued to return fire himself while surgically and lethally executing fires on enemy positions using artillery, rotary wing, and fixed-wing close-air support. Sergeant Villegas gallantly suppressed the enemy, protected his team, and neutralized numerous enemy threats without any collateral damage. His heroic and aggressive actions, under direct fire, saved the lives of his teammates and ensured mission success resulting in a total of 32 enemy insurgents killed in action. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Sergeant Villegas has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

