



JESSICA ROUTIER IS RUNNING FOR SGT. 1ST CLASS MERIDETH L. HOWARD

Sgt. 1st Class Merideth L. Howard was born on July 2, 1954, in Corpus Christi, Texas. She was a trained civil affairs non-commissioned officer assigned to the 364th Civil Affairs Brigade, Portland, Ore.

She died in northeastern Afghanistan, when a vehicle bomb exploded near her up-armored Humvee during a patrol on Sept. 8, 2006.

A resident of Waukesha, Wis., Howard entered the U.S. Army Reserve in 1988 in Oakland, Calif.

Upon completion of her advanced individual training as an Army medical equipment repairer at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Howard was advanced to the rank of specialist. Her first Army Reserve duty assignment was with Headquarters, 6253rd U.S. Army Hospital, Hamilton Army Air Field, Novato, Calif.



In 1992, she moved into a leadership position after a promotion to sergeant, and served as a medical noncommissioned officer, which required her to convert her job specialty to a medical healthcare specialist. She served with the unit until her enlistment contract expired in 1994. Howard was then reassigned to the Individual Ready Reserve for 11 years before she was recalled to active duty in 2005 to support the Global War on Terrorism.

Her mobilization included completing the Mobilized Civil Affairs Course at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Fort Bragg, N.C. Howard was assigned to the 364th Civil Affairs Brigade, Portland, Ore., which deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in the spring of 2006. The 364th CA Bde. is a subordinate unit of the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne).

Howard's military training included the Army Medical Equipment Repairer Course, Healthcare Specialist Course, Professional Leadership Development Course, Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course, Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course, Civil Affairs Reclassification Course and the Combat Lifesaver Course.



Her civilian education included both a bachelor's degree in biology and a master's degree in marine resources management from Texas A&M University. She also earned her certification in both fire protection and sprinkler system design.

Her military awards included the Army Achievement Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" Device, NCO Professional Development Ribbon with numeral three, Army Service Ribbon, Afghanistan Campaign Medal and the Expert Marksmanship Qualification Badge.

In her civilian occupation, Howard worked as fire protection specialist, designing construction specifications and inspecting fire alarm systems, sprinkler systems and fire pumps.

Howard is survived by both her husband, Hugh K. Hvolboll, and her cousin, Melissa K. Lanier.



Family Photo via Associated Press