



# Son of Al Butler Class of 1969

U.S. Marine Maj. Gen. Richard Natonski presented the Bronze Star Medal with Combat Distinguishing Device to 1st Lt. Alfred L. Butler IV, executive officer for Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment outside the battalion's command post on Camp Fallujah, Iraq, May 19, 2006. U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Mark Sixbey

## 1st Lt. Alfred L. Butler IV

### U.S. Marine Corps, 1st Lt. Alfred L. Butler IV Darkhorse Marine Decorated for Valor

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq, May 22, 2006 — A Darkhorse Marine was decorated with the nation's fourth highest award for valor by the 1st Marine Division commanding general here, May 19.

U.S. Marine 1st Lt. Alfred L. Butler IV, Weapons Company executive officer, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, received the Bronze Star Medal with Combat Distinguishing Device from Maj. Gen. Richard Natonski.

"I knew his father, and I think he's following in his footsteps," Natonski said. "This is his third deployment to Iraq, and he's done a marvelous job over here."

The 27-year-old from Jacksonville, N.C., earned the award for his actions and leadership while commanding an 81 mm Mortar Platoon on Dec. 23, 2004, during combat operations in Fallujah. He is currently on duty in Iraq with Regimental Combat Team 5.

"It was one of those days when everyone ran out of ammo," said Butler, a graduate of Western Carolina University. "We even used AK-47s."

According to the award citation, as insurgents ambushed his platoon, Butler rushed to the attack where he found several men pinned under heavy automatic weapons fire on a stairwell. He evacuated them from the house and learned insurgents isolated additional men on the second floor. He quickly organized an assault force and raced to an adjacent house under constant small arms fire to recover the men.

Cpl. Justin Butler, a mortarman in the platoon, saw his platoon commander from across the street while laying suppressive fire.

"When we were on the roof, he was the first one I saw standing up to see the situation while everyone was getting shot at," said the 21-year-old from Dyer, Ind. "It pumped everybody up that he would do that just to know everything that's going on."

The platoon commander led his team as they cleared two buildings, jumping from roof-to-roof to reach them. He shielded the bodies of the fallen Marines when a grenade landed nearby with complete disregard for his own safety, then threw two grenades into a room filled with insurgents.

While delivering cover fire, the lieutenant moved the men across to an adjacent rooftop, personally evacuating a wounded Marine under constant small arms fire and grenade attacks. His actions preserved the lives of the men.

He credited the decoration to the Marines under his command.

"I owe those Marines my life," he said. "The things they did that day are the sort of things you read about in books. What they do for each other and what they sacrifice for each other makes you not want to leave the Marine Corps. They hold up the tradition of 3/5 and live up to the legacy."

**Alfred Butler III, was a Marine major who was killed in Beirut when his son was only 5 years old. The lieutenant said most of what he knows of his father he learned from Marines who served with him.**

"It's nice that he (Natonski) knew my father and served with him," he said. "My knowledge of him as a person is through people like General Natonski and what they say about him and the man he was. From what I understand, he was a great man, great Marine, husband and father. If I can be half of that, I think I'll be fine."