

Russell Paul Smith



Distinguished Flying Cross Award Citation

For heroism while participating in aerial flight evidenced by valorous action above and beyond the call of duty in the Republic of Vietnam. Warrant Officer Smith distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous action on 25 April 1969, while serving as an aircraft commander of an AH-1G helicopter during a rescue mission of a downed helicopter near Quan Loi, Republic of Vietnam. Immediately upon reaching the area, warrant Officer Smith took command of the rescue operation. Despite threatening thunder storms and approaching darkness, Warrant Officer Smith displayed determination and courage in his effort to extract the people in the downed craft. When darkness covered the area the extraction helicopters were unable to locate the pick-up zone. Warrant Officer Smith flew his cobra gunship dangerously low in mountainous terrain and directed the lift helicopters into the area with his search light. Despite impending enemy fire, Warrant Officer Smith orbited the lift helicopters with his searchlight until the extraction was completed. Warrant Officer Smith's outstanding flying ability and devotion to duty is in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service, and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

Branch of Service: U. S. Army

Theatre for DFC: Vietnam

Aircraft: AH-1G Cobra