



Staff Sergeant Emil Rivera-Lopez
8 March 1986 - 25 August 2017

Staff Sergeant Emil Rivera-Lopez died on 25 August 2017. He was deployed overseas, aboard an MH-60M Black Hawk helicopter when it crashed into the water during a training mission off the southern coast of Yemen. The subsequent rescue mission failed to recover the MH-60M or his remains.

SSG Rivera-Lopez was born 8 March 1986 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. He volunteered for service in the U.S. Army on 18 July 2006 and attended Basic Combat Training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, followed by Advanced Individual Training at Fort Eustis, Virginia, where he was trained as a UH-60 Black Hawk Helicopter Repairer (15T).

SSG Rivera-Lopez began his service with Delta Company, 3rd Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade from March 2007 to September 2008. Following his assignment with Delta Company, he served as a Crew Chief with the 3-82nd MEDEVAC Company until May 2013. Upon completion of Night Stalker Enlisted Green Platoon in July 2013, where he was recognized as the Distinguished Honor Graduate, SSG Rivera-Lopez was assigned to Delta Company, 3rd Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne) at Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia, where he served as an MH-60M Maintainer and Squad Leader. In November 2014, he was reassigned to Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion where he served as a Section Sergeant and MH-60M Crew Chief.

SSG Rivera-Lopez was a combat veteran with multiple deployments in support of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and INHERENT RESOLVE.

SSG Rivera-Lopez was a graduate of the Basic Leader Course, Advanced Leader Course, Night Stalker Enlisted Green Platoon (Honor Graduate), the Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE) High Risk (Level C) Course, MH-60 Maintainer Course, MH-60 Non-rated Crewmember Course, Dunker, and Airborne School.

SSG Rivera-Lopez's awards and decorations include the Air Medal (w/Numeral 2), Army Commendation Medal (w/"V" Device), Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal (w/2 OLC), Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Army Good Conduct Medal (3rd Award), National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal (w/3 Bronze Service Stars), Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal,

Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, NCO Professional Development Ribbon (w/Numeral 2), Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, NATO Medal, Combat Action Badge, Aviation Badge, and Parachutist Badge. He was posthumously awarded the Meritorious Service Medal and Senior Aviation Badge.

SSG Rivera-Lopez is survived by his wife, Amanda; son, Elijah; daughter, Remy; stepsons, B.J. and Gabriel; stepdaughter, Jocelyn; parents, Eduvigis and Carlita; brother, Lemuel; and sisters, Veronica and Carla. There is a memorial gravestone marker at Arlington National Cemetery, Section MC, Site 25-L-1.