

1 LT David T Wright II

**David Timothy Wright II was born on July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1983, in Norman, Oklahoma. He was a graduate of Moore High School and the University of Oklahoma, earning a degree in Criminal Justice while on a full track scholarship.**

**David was raised in a law enforcement family with his father being a Captain with the Moore, Oklahoma Police Department. As a result David always had the desire to join the military or become a Police Officer himself.**

**In November of 2006 David began the process to join the Arlington Police Department. As he progressed through the process he arrived at the Polygraph session. During the Polygraph he was continually told that he was trying to influence the results with his breathing and other factors. David become irritated with the examiner as he felt like his integrity was being questioned. However, he remained calm in the presence of the examiner. Once the examiner left the room David vented his irritation by making an inappropriate hand jester towards the door. At this time David was unaware that he was being video taped.**

**The recruiter called David and told him of the tape and asked him why he had reacted in this manner. David's reply was that he felt his integrity was being questioned and also stated that he remained professional with with examiner while he was in the room and only vented his frustration after the examiner had left. The recruiter told him at this time he would not be allowed to continue in the process.**

**This situation caused David to reevaluate his career choice and upon graduation felt the best path to travel at that time would be to become an Officer in the United States Army. He felt this would give him the much needed work experiences to become a Police Officer at a later date.**

**Following graduation David was chosen to enter the Officer program in the United States Army in February, 2007. He was ordered to report to Fort Benning, Georgia, were officer candidates along side enlisted soldiers complete their basic training. During the basic training process the Drill Instructors will select one soldier as the Platoon Leader and this position is generally held from one to three days depending on the recruits ability before they are fired and replaced with another recruit.**

**David was selected on day one as Platoon Leader for his unit and held this position through the entire basic training process of 9 weeks. After completing basic training David was selected as the top soldier "Soldier of the Cycle" for the entire Company and received the Army Achievement Medal. During the Basic Training process David gained a tremendous amount of respect for his veteran Drill Instructor and spoke of him often.**

**David then completed Officer Candidate School (OCS) and upon his graduation was met by Sgt Dicks (his basic training drill instructor) who had made a point to attend the graduation to ensure he was the soldier who had the privilege of giving David his first salute. Sgt Dicks wife spoke to me at this graduation ceremony and stated that in the three years her husband had been a Drill Instructor that he never spoke of another recruit like he spoke of David. Sgt Dicks had been in the Army 12 years at this point and asked David if they had the fortune to be at the same base in the future when he resigned for another term if David would do the honors.**

**Early on in his Army career David T. Wright II made a lasting impression on the people he met at Fort Benning. One of his closest friends and a fellow soldier, 1Lt Reamer Argo, had this to say about David:**

*“You always hear about special people rising up in stressful situations to shine their brightest when the times are toughest.....This would be one of the best ways to describe Dave.....He inspired us with his leadership and determination to make it through the hard times.....We spent so much time together and I enjoyed every second.”* **1Lt Reamer Argo**

**Following his graduation from OCS, now a United States Army officer, Lt. David T. Wright II soon found himself deployed to Afghanistan and quickly rose to the position of senior platoon leader for Blackwatch Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment. Lt. Wright soon earned the respect, admiration and love of the men he led:**

*“We all loved Lt Wright on a professional level because he was a great leader. We loved him on a personal level because he treated us with respect.....Selfless, intelligent, courageous, and the best leader 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon could have ever had.....He filled shoes that we all thought would be tough to fill and left behind shoes that will be impossible to fill.”* **Spc Trevor Lampton**

**Lt. Wright quickly made an impression on his commanding officer with his demonstration of leadership, confidence, and love he exhibited for the men he led. His commanding officer called him “a Soldier’s Soldier” with drive, initiative and desire that set him apart:**

*“He was a warrior, a leader, and a friend to many. Soldiers looked up to him, leaders respected him.....He believed in the mission here and had the confidence that regardless of how difficult the situation may be, he could make a difference.....He cared endlessly for them (his men), sacrificing so much of himself to ensure they were ready to deploy and fight, both personally and professionally.....They respected him tremendously.”* **Capt Casey Thoreen, Commanding Officer**

**Captain Thoreen called Lt. Wright his “go-to guy” and described several of his missions:**

*“Through eight days of dismounted patrols through the Southern Arghandab River Valley, an enemy stronghold that had already taken a number of American lives, Dave led his Platoon exceptionally. I consistently gave him the most difficult missions, always kept his platoon in the lead, and knew that even with just my general guidance and intent, I could count on Dave and his guys to come out on top. We conducted a raid on a Taliban compound.....he and his guys*

*were wading through a fast moving chest deep river, holding their equipment high over their heads to get around to the enemy's main escape route, I became worried they wouldn't be able to continue. Yet, in true 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon fashion, they did, becoming the pivotal point in the operation.....Dave and his guys never ceased to impress."*

*"He was an incredible Soldier and individual. His life was cut far too short, but he accomplished and experienced so much more in those few years than many will accomplish in a lifetime."* **Capt Thoren**

**Therefore it was no surprise that Battalion Commander, Lt Colonel Jeffrey French, called on 1Lt David T Wright II and his platoon to carry out a dangerous mission that the Lt Colonel himself would lead. The platoon had adopted their own name and mascot, the Mighty Goldfish Warriors, and wore patches on their Individual Body Armor identifying themselves. On a number of occasions intercepts of Taliban communication indicated their fear of "the guys with the fish on their chests". The mission was completed successfully and Lt Wright and his platoon were ordered to return to base.**

**And so it was on that fateful date, September 14<sup>th</sup> 2009, as Lt Wright was performing his duties as a United States Army soldier and preparing to lead his platoon back to safety, that David gave his life for his country due to an IED attack.**

*"Nobody else can ever live up to the bar that this platoon leader set..... If any of you are wondering why you don't feel his presence here today, it is because he is still in Afghanistan, looking after his boys."* **Spc Lampton**

*"So why did they do it? I think we all know why.....They did it because they knew the mission and being there for their brothers was important enough to risk everything. They did it because they knew they were making a difference."* **Capt Thoren**

*"I know that the Soldiers with whom David served have a great deal of respect and love for him. His actions and service to his country were definitely not in vain and on numerous occasions, saved the life of his brothers serving next to him."* **Lt Col Jeffrey French, Commander 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment**

**All soldiers that are killed in action are flown to Dover, Delaware for processing and then escorted home by another soldier to their final resting place. SFC Dicks (David's former Drill Instructor) had the honor of bringing David home to Oklahoma. When a soldier arrives home the possessions that they fiscally had on their body at the time of death are presented to the family. We were presented with David's dog tags, his watch and a brand new Arlington Police Department Patch that he had carried in the pocket of his uniform.**

**David had told us on more than one occasion that he had made a huge mistake in Arlington. He said he could not change the past however he could learn from it and in the future when he had completed his tour with the Army he would return to Arlington and pursue becoming an Officer. We feel like David kept the patch with him to make sure he always remembered that in any given situation keeping his bearing was his first priority, and from all reports as you can see he was successful.**