2012 Hero of Military Medicine has background in the College of Education & Human Development

Texas A&M University alumnus Col. Russ Kotwal ‘85 received the 2012 Heroes of Military Medicine award on behalf of the Henry M. Jackson Foundation for the Advancement of Military Medicine in Washington D.C. on May 2.

One of only three individuals to be awarded this recognition, Kotwal was honored for his service in healthcare for our nation’s military, and for progressing medicine and furthering medical practices to active military service members, veterans and their families.

Kotwal has served in the U.S. Army for over 27 years and is the Deputy Command Surgeon for the U.S. Army Special Operations Command. According to information provided by the Center for Public-Private Partnerships, he served four years with the 25th Infantry Division, nine years with the 75th Ranger Regiment and two years with the U.S Army Special Operations Command. He served in combat with the Rangers in deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq, and conducted hundreds of combat ground and air missions as the senior medical provider, for which he was awarded five Bronze Star medals, two Joint Service Commendation medals for valor, and two combat jump stars.

Over the course of his military career, Kotwal has earned numerous merit awards and medals, including three commendation and four achievement medals. He was recognized by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for Excellence in Military Medicine, Distinguished Member of the 75th Ranger Regiment, Special Operations Medical Association Award for Lifetime Achievement, Order of Military Medical Merit, and Infantry Order of Saint Maurice.

Kotwal earned a Bachelor of Science in Health Education from Texas A&M University in 1985, a Doctor of Medicine from the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (1996), and a Master of Public Health from the University of Texas Medical Branch (2004). He completed residency training in both Family Medicine at Martin Army Community Hospital (1996-1999) and Aerospace Medicine at the Naval Operational Medicine Institute (2003-2005). He is also a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians.

“The degree I received from the Texas A&M University College of Education provided me with a solid foundation in community health,” Kotwal said. “I have since used my education to serve the military community and improve health outcomes on the battlefield through teaching, research and outreach activities.”

Kotwal is also an adjunct professor for the Texas A&M Health Science Center and Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, and a member of the U.S. Department of Defense Health Board Committee on Tactical Combat Casualty Care.

Born in Birmingham, Alabama and raised in the military--Kotwal’s father served 30 years in the U.S. Army. His wife, Bari, lives in College Station and works for the Texas Transportation Institute at Texas A&M. The Kotwal’s have three children; one is currently attending Texas A&M University in pursuit of a degree in landscape architecture.
Reported by: Sumanta Ray ’14

Sources: CP3 (http://www.hjfcp3.org)