

# Children of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund

For Immediate Release  
December 13, 2005

In accordance with guidelines set forth by the Grant Committee of the Children of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund, Inc.,  
™ we are pleased to announce the recipients of the following awards made during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2005:



**Rhonda Lucas, proud wife of Petty Officer Jeffrey Alan Lucas**  
**Hometown: Corbett, OR**  
**Financial Award: \$2,000.00**

Petty Officer Jeff Lucas served in the United States Navy for seventeen years as a Navy Seal. Petty Officer Lucas was named Navy Seal of the year in 2004. He was 33 years old when he boarded a helicopter with other comrades to help during a heavy fight in the mountains of Afghanistan. Eight Navy Seals and eight members of the Army's 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, known as the Night Stalkers, were aboard a Chinook helicopter that crashed in the eastern mountains of Afghanistan on June 28, 2005. It was the deadliest single blow to American forces fighting an escalating insurgency in the country. Petty Officer Lucas was one of the casualties. He leaves behind his beautiful wife, Rhonda and 5 year old son, Sean. The Jeff Lucas Memorial has been set up in honor of his service to our country.

These words were from our Vice President, Chris Griffin who made the award personally:

*I delivered the grant to Ms. Lucas as promised, on Thursday.*

*I have to tell you that it was very stressful and rewarding at the same time. She was very grateful, and still very upset about her loss.*

*I took away the following insight from my first experience in this matter:*

*Upon entering her doorway, I was introduced to her husband via a memorial set of pictures. He looks very handsome, rugged, and really almost Hollywood like. Rhonda showed me his pictures and started to talk about him in the present tense. She talked about the SEAL community, how they internalize everything that happens and has happened. She welled up into tears when I handed her the grant and hugged me like I was a long lost relative. As we talked together over the 30 minutes that I visited, I was taken by how much she very strongly loves her husband. In that sense, it was heartbreaking. I tried very hard to hold back my tears, I could really feel how she felt.*

*When I got into my vehicle, I couldn't help but to break down. I felt an overwhelming respect and love for this man and his family. It was the single most warming thing I have ever done, I'm still emotional over it.*

*Thank you Becky for giving me the opportunity to help these families who have lost so much. We can only give so little, but the main thing is that we CARE about them. I think they understand that, at least Rhonda did.*



**Terri Potts, proud wife of Sgt. Christopher S. Potts**  
**Hometown: Tiverton, RI**  
**Financial Award: \$4,900.00**

Sgt. Potts was assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 103<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, Rhode Island National Guard in Providence, RI. Sgt. Potts was killed on his 38<sup>th</sup> birthday, October 3, 2004 when insurgents attacked a traffic-control post in Iraq. Sgt. Potts had been in the National Guard for 14 years. He was a member of Rhode Island's Battery A, 1st Battalion, 103rd Field Artillery Regiment, which deployed to Iraq with the 206th. While leading his men in a combat patrol, Potts ordered his men to stay back, out of the line of fire, when he was engaged by enemy forces, Oct. 3 2004. While continuing to return fire in an effort to suppress the enemy, Potts was fatally wounded.

"Sergeant Potts made the ultimate sacrifice during this maneuver," said his commander, Maj. Christian Neary, as he addressed the congregation. "His actions saved his soldiers

from certain injury or death." "He always made sure his soldiers came first," said Guadalupe, who was a friend of the fallen sergeant. "Always lead from the front...and that's what he did that day." (By 1st Lt. Chris J. Heathscott / 39th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs Officer)

Sgt. Potts leaves behind his beautiful wife, Terri and two young sons Christopher and Jackson. During our conversations with Mrs. Potts we found that Christopher was a big fan of the New England Patriots, the NFL team that won the Super bowl last year. One of our sponsors after hearing of Christopher's allegiance to the Patriots waited until after the Super bowl to make sure the Patriots won before they sent a Super bowl plaque to him. The most heart-warming and painstaking reality is that these two young sons will never again have the warmth and comfort of their father. Jackson who was only 2 years old was at his father's side everyday, working in the yard and around the house with him, when asked what was Christopher's favorite team we were surprised to find that Jackson at only 2 years old had his own favorite, the Dallas Cowboys surprised by the answer we found that Jackson and his Dad spent their Sundays watching the Cowboys together, as it was Daddies favorite team.



**Dean Cunningham, proud son of SSG Darren James Cunningham**  
**Hometown: Groton, MA**  
**Financial Award: \$2,250.00**

SSG Cunningham who served with the 545th Military Police Company of the Army's 1st Cavalry died on September 30, 2004. He was 40 years old when he was died September 30, 2004 after his unit came under mortar attack while he was asleep. He also served in Operation Desert Storm. He was assigned to the Army's 89th Military Police Brigade, Fort Hood, Texas when he died overseas. Serving in our military for twenty-two years SSG Cunningham joined the Army after graduation from High School at age 18. He had served as a platoon sergeant in Iraq as part of the Persian Gulf War of 1991. Previously, he had been deployed to Korea. In both countries he learned the language and customs so he could work more efficiently. Part of his job in Iraq was training Iraqi police officers.

SSG Cunningham is survived by his daughter Kaitlin, 12 years old and 16 year old son, Dean Cunningham. A scholarship has been established in his name. Donations can be made at Staff Sgt. Darren J. Cunningham Scholarship Fund, c/o Middlesex Savings Bank, PO Box 1188, Groton, MA 01450.

These awards totaling \$9, 150.00 were made possible through donations received by the public, charity events held by other organizations and businesses and fundraisers held by the Children of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund <sup>TM</sup>.

We thank all who contribute to our efforts to help families of our U.S. Military. To the families of our brave, one of the most valuable and precious things that we have been guaranteed is the "gift" of freedom and we have your service member to thank for that. We also thank you for all your sacrifices at home, you are heroes to us all. For further information, please contact us at [info@cfsrf.org](mailto:info@cfsrf.org) or visit our website at: [www.cfsrf.org](http://www.cfsrf.org)