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MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA

Media Release

Marine Corps Air Station Yuma
Public Affairs Office
P.O. Box 99113
Yuma, AZ 85369
Office: (928) 269-3682
Fax: (928) 269-3282

www.mcas-yuma.marines.mil
www.dvidshub.net/units/MCASY

yumapao@usmc.mil

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VMA-211 Marines Receive Purple Hearts

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA, Ariz. (August 01, 2013) – Lance Cpl. Cole Collums, an aviation electronics technician, Sgt. Jonathan Cudo, a powerline mechanic, and former Cpl. Matthew Eason, also a powerline mechanic, all from Marine Attack Squadron 211, received Purple Hearts today for injuries sustained during the Sept. 14, 2012 attack on Camp Bastion. The three Marines answered Lt. Col. Christopher Raible’s call for volunteers to join a counter-attack and were wounded in the fight for the airfield.

Eason, Collums and Cudo are the second, third and fourth Marines from VMA-211 who acted at Camp Bastion to receive the Purple Heart. Maj. Greer Chambless is also a Purple Heart recipient.

“There’s nothing that really separates me from everybody else who was out there, because it could have been anyone,” said Collums, a native of Mountainburg, Ark. “The only difference is that we were unlucky, yet lucky to be alive.”

“At the time all I could think of was the guys and girls in my shop and keeping them safe,” added Cudo, who hails from Phoenix. “I didn’t really care about my well-being. There were guys there with two kids and a family, and I didn’t want them going outside.”

The attack was a coordinated assault by 15 Taliban insurgents which resulted in the destruction of six AV-8B Harriers IIs with two more severely damaged. 14 of the insurgents were killed in the counter-attack, one was injured and captured.

Lt. Col. Christopher Raible and Sgt. Bradley Atwell gave their lives in defense of the camp. A total of eight coalition troops and one civilian contractor were injured.

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For further questions, please contact Cpl. Bill Waterstreet, MCAS Yuma Public Affairs media relations chief, at (928) 269-3682.