USNH Trustees Recognize and Commend the Service and Sacrifice of Sgt. Ryan M. Pitts

UNH Alumnus to Receive The Medal of Honor

June 27, 2014 – CONCORD - The University System of New Hampshire Board of Trustees unanimously voted to pass a resolution commending UNH Alumnus, Sgt. Ryan M. Pitts for his exemplary service and being awarded our nation’s highest military honor.

On July 21, 2014 at a White House ceremony, President Obama will bestow the Nashua native with the nation's highest military honor for valor, the Medal of Honor, making Pitts the ninth living recipient to be honored for actions in Iraq or Afghanistan.

On July 13, 2008, the Battle of Wanat -- the deadliest single firefight in the Afghanistan war -- Pitts put his family of fellow soldiers first. The then 22-year-old was nearing the end of his second tour of duty at a remote outpost serving as a forward observer with the 2nd Platoon chosen company, when hundreds of enemy fighters started launching rocket propelled grenades and automatic weapons fire. Nearly everyone was hit, including Pitts.

Sgt. Pitts was the last paratrooper at the outpost and despite his injuries he continued to fight, trying to keep the enemy at bay until help arrived. Pitts crawled under heavy fire and whispered reports over the radio. Nine soldiers died that day and 27 were hurt.

After his military discharge, Sergeant Pitts graduated with honors in 2013 from the University of New Hampshire with a business degree. He has received the UNH Award for Excellence and currently serves on the University of New Hampshire Alumni Association board of directors.

“The University System of New Hampshire Board of Trustees is proud to join the nation in recognizing Sgt. Pitts for his selfless commitment and heroism in battle.
We formally commend him for his service,” said USNH Board Chair Pamela Diamantis.
USNH Chancellor Dr. Todd Leach marked the occasion by noting the great contributions veterans provide to the higher ed community. “The breadth of knowledge from their service enhances the experiences of other students. We are proud to commend Sgt. Pitts for his service and are grateful to have him in our USNH community.”
“In addition to his tremendous sacrifice, Sgt. Pitts has remained an active member of our UNH community, providing thoughtful perspectives to our discussions. We are proud to call him a Wildcat,” said UNH President Mark Huddleston.
For more information, please contact Tiffany Eddy at tiffany.eddy@usnh.edu or 603-657-6471.