



Fullerton, California  
Silver Star

### Corporal Moses Cardenas

Corporal Moses Cardenas upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps when he nearly lost his life during the bold rescue of a fellow Marine. For this feat, Cardenas was awarded the Silver Star.

On one hot August morning near Rawah, Iraq, Lance Corporal Moses Cardenas of the Marines 1<sup>st</sup> Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion found his platoon barraged by an insurgent suicide bomb, numerous rocket-propelled grenades, and heavy machine gun fire. In the chaotic moments that followed, Cardenas would have to decide between attempting the rescue of his wounded sergeant or remain in his covered position until reinforcements arrived. The choice was simple.

Cardenas thought, "He was my sergeant; I had to do something," and with that he courageously charged 50 meters through the kill-zone to his wounded comrade. Running the gauntlet through enemy fire, he was shot in the neck by the spray of weapons' fire. Undeterred, he arrived at Sgt. Randy Roedema's exposed position and performed first-aid to stop the flow of blood from Roedema's severe wounds.

With both Marines wounded and under the sights of numerous insurgents, Cardenas knew if he was to save his friend he must evacuate both of them to safety. With his M249 Squad Automatic Weapon charged and a grip on his injured sergeant, Cardenas rotated between firing his machine gun and pulling Roedema across the battlefield. Reaching the relative safety of his platoon's convoy, Cardenas continued laying down suppressive fire until the situation came under control and medics could tend to the wounded Marines.

Cardenas was awarded the Silver Star, the third highest military award. Roedema would later reflect "I owe him my life." Four days after Cardenas saved his life, Roedema's wife gave birth to their first child – a child that will have a father because of the selfless act preformed by Cardenas on that summer morning in Iraq

