



*Pictured L-R: NCOA President Paul Kingsbury, Sgt John E. James, Sergeant Major Monica Cervantes, and NCOA Chairman of the Board Terry Haines*

The 2021 NCOA Marine Corps Vanguard Award, sponsored by the NCOA JROTC Program, was presented to Sergeant John E. James in honor and memory of Medal of Honor recipient Corporal Larry L. Maxam, U.S. Marine Corps.

Sergeant James' superior judgement, courage, and bearing were instrumental in developing international relationships with geostrategic implications.

On 6 November 2020. Sergeant James showed great judgement and superior decision-making abilities when a local national frantically ran up to him screaming "habu, habu." The local national had been attacked by a habu snake while tending to her garden. The venom of the habu snakes in Okinawa has a high toxicity level. Sergeant James' quick actions saved this 80-year old local national's life. A bite from a habu snake can cause nausea, vomiting, hypotension, and sometimes death. A significant percentage of victims suffer from permanent disability after a bite. With rapid lifesaving techniques followed by prompt clinical care, Sgt James helped reduce the risk to this victim's life.

Specifically, Sgt James was outside of the saloon in Kintown, Okinawa, when the elderly lady approached him screaming. He remained calm and ensured that the local national kept her heart rate down to prevent the venom from spreading throughout her body. James then utilized his combat lifesaving, as he quickly created a field tourniquet

out of a belt, while simultaneously directing others to call the ambulance. Within five minutes, the ambulance arrived on scene and took the local national to the hospital. The hospital confirmed it was indeed a habu bite and said that without Sgt James' field tourniquet and quick response, the elderly Japanese woman would not have survived.

Sergeant James' decisiveness and responsiveness in rescuing this injured Japanese woman demonstrated his exceptional professionalism and the selflessness expected of a United States Marine. More importantly, James' actions had a positive impact on a global scale. It is marines like him that justify the force's presence on Okinawa to the local population. By contributing to the positive image of marines in Okinawa, he helped the Marine Expeditionary Force reinforce its positive messaging. His actions have improved and increased communication and cooperation at all levels amongst U.S. Forces and our allies, both uniformed and civilian, in the Indo-Pacific area of operations.

Sergeant James' unwavering courage and decisive actions reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Marine Corps.

