

Capt. Paul W. Peña, 27, of San Marcos, Texas passed away Jan. 19, 2010 in Arghandab River Valley, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when enemy forces attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device. He was born July 8, 1982 in San Antonio.

Paul is preceded in death by his grandparents, John and Beatriz (Calderon) Peña.

He is survived by his mother, Cecilia Peña of San Marcos; aunts, Carmen Peña Giombetti and husband, Vince, Celeste Calderon, uncles, John Peña and wife, Linda and Paul A. Peña; cousins, Cristina Pinto, Joanna White, Bridget Calderon, John F. Peña, Cate Peña, Luke Peña, Patrick Peña and Alicia Peña and he will be greatly missed by a host of friends and his Army family.

He was a member of the Junior ROTC at the San Marcos Baptist Academy where he was named "best all around student" by his school's National Honor Society chapter, and was voted most likely to succeed by his classmates. He created a disc golf course at the school for his Eagle Scout project. Peña graduated from the San Marcos Baptist Academy in 2000 and entered the U.S. Military Academy as a member of the class of 2004. Following graduation, he attended Infantry Officers Basic Course, Basic Airborne School and Ranger School at Fort Benning, Ga. Upon completion of his training, Peña reported to Fort Richardson, Alaska, with the 3rd Battalion, 509th Infantry Regiment (Airborne). He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C.

Peña's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, the Army Commendation Medal with two Bronze Oak Leaf clusters, the Valorous Unit Award, the National Defense Service Medal, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Service Ribbon, the NATO Medal, the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Parachutists Badge and the Ranger Tab. He had previously been awarded the Bronze Star for heroic or meritorious achievement or service during his previous deployments.

Brig. Gen. Daniel Menard called Peña a "recognized leader" among his peers. He further stated "Peña was a quiet professional; he always had a smile on his face and was admired by his soldiers".

Memorial contributions in Paul's memory may be made to the San Marcos Baptist Academy, Captain Paul W. Peña Memorial Scholarship Fund, 2801 Ranch Road 12, San Marcos, Texas 78666, or West Point Fund, Association of Graduates, 698 Mills Road, West Point, NY 10996 or to the charity of choice.

Family will receive friends 5:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M., Thursday, January 28, 2010 at the San Marcos Baptist Academy with a memorial service at 7:00 P.M, with the Reverend Dr. Mark Miller officiating.

Family will receive friends 10:00 A.M., Friday, January 29, 2010 at St. John's the Evangelist, 128 S. Audubon Dr., San Antonio, TX with a Mass of Christian Burial celebrated at 11:00 A.M., with Father Stuart Juleen officiating. Interment to follow at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, San Antonio, Texas.

Arrangements under the care and guidance of Pennington Funeral Home, 323 N. Comanche Street, San Marcos, TX , 512-353-4311. Obituary and guestbook online at [www.penningtonfuneralhome.com](http://www.penningtonfuneralhome.com).