



## **LTC (Ret) Gerald (Jerry) D. Attaway**



Lieutenant Colonel Gerald (Jerry) D. Attaway was born in Fouke, Arkansas, on August 5, 1942. Raised in Texarkana, he was active in the Boy Scouts, the Royal Ambassador church program, and Little League Baseball.

At the age of 15, Jerry enlisted in the Army and was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, KY. At 16, he completed Airborne School and earned his parachute wings. When the Army discovered his true age, he received a minority discharge, but he reenlisted at the age of 17 with his mother's permission. Upon completion of his three-year enlistment, Jerry received an honorable discharge and enrolled in Arlington State College and ROTC. Jerry was a member of the Sam Houston Rifles and was selected to be Cadet Corps Commander. He graduated from The University of Texas at Arlington on May 31, 1968, with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration. He graduated as a Distinguished Military Graduate and earned a Regular Army Infantry Commission.

Attaway was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, NC. There he served as an Infantry Platoon Leader but quickly volunteered and was transferred to the United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MAC V). In his first combat tour, he was a Senior Advisor within MAC V and was **awarded the Silver Star**. The citation reads as follows: "For gallantry in action: First Lieutenant Attaway distinguished himself by gallantry in action on 20 January 1970 while serving as Senior Advisor, Mobile Advisory Team II-42, Advisory Team 37, United States Army Advisory Group, II Corps Tactical Zone, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. When the Regional Forces squad with whom he was working came under attack, Lieutenant Attaway personally led an attack against the enemy, causing them to withdraw up a small hill. Moving out ahead of his squad, he continued to pursue the enemy up the hill while calling for the squad to follow him. While nearing the top of the hill, Lieutenant Attaway received concentrated automatic rifle fire, and grenades were hurled against his position. He then reacted with total disregard for his own safety by returning grenade and automatic weapon fire on the enemy positions. He rallied his men and began to maneuver against the enemy, forcing them to withdraw from the hill leaving behind two dead, documents and equipment. First Lieutenant Attaway's conspicuous gallantry in action was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Army and reflects great credit upon himself and the military service."

In his second combat tour, he commanded a recon company within 2/5th CAV, 1st Cavalry Division. In addition to the Silver Star, Jerry was awarded the following decorations and medals: Bronze Star (1 OLC), National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge, Ranger Tab, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, two Overseas Service Ribbons, and the Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Jerry was discharged from active duty in April 1971, and he enrolled in the South Texas School of Law in Houston, TX. He joined his two brothers—James A. Attaway, Jr., and Charles L. Attaway—in the practice of law in Mesquite, TX. Attaway accepted a commission in the Texas Army National Guard in the Judge Advocate General's Corps. As an Army lawyer, Attaway held many positions; his final assignment was the Staff Judge Advocate of the 49th Armored Division. Jerry retired April 1993, at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Early on in his civilian law practice, Jerry took on a mission to assist the country of Burma, today called Myanmar, to defeat pirates who had been attacking Burmese vessels. This involved working with a U.S. company to construct, sell, and deliver to the Burmese government a fleet of armed high-speed boats. Later in his law career, Jerry joined the Dallas County District

Attorney's Office as a felony prosecutor. He died of a heart attack in a Dallas courtroom while prosecuting a felony criminal offense on November 1, 1993.

Jerry and his wife Maggie were married in 1980. They had two children, daughter, Chaney Padaca, and son, Jason Attaway. Maggie lives in Hawaii, as do Chaney, Myles (Chaney's husband), and their two children, Ava and Ikaika. Jason, his wife Kristal, and their two children, Kayla and Jason, Jr., live in Quitman, TX. Jason is a combat veteran and served with the 82nd Airborne Division and the 25th Infantry Division.