

DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT



**COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
JOE "CHINA BOY" LOPEZ**
U.S. Army, Retired

Inducted November 5, 2020



Command Sergeant Major Joe "China Boy" Lopez, a native of Sanger, California, joined the Army in 1955, and at the age of 17 received his Parachute Wings at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. In 1956 he was stationed in Munich, Germany. He returned to Fort Campbell in 1959, serving as an Infantry Squad Leader and later a Platoon Sergeant. Once the Cuban Crisis started, Command Sgt. Maj. Lopez went through Special Forces training and graduated in 1965.

In 1966, Command Sgt. Maj. Lopez received classified orders to Latin America and then to South Vietnam. While in Vietnam, he was injured, and was on orders to return to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. While in recovery, he requested to get back to his men and finish his tour. He then volunteered for one of the most dangerous jobs with the 5th Special Forces Group Mobile Strike Force.

In 1968, he was stationed in Germany and awarded two Silver Star Medals for his actions in Vietnam. Command Sergeant Major Lopez returned to Vietnam and served with the Mobile Strike Force once again. Following another injury, he was returned to Fort Bragg, where he served as the S3 Training Officer and graduated from the Sergeants Major Academy in 1973.

He was inducted in the Hall of Honor at the Military Science Department at The University of Texas at Arlington for his work at the university. Command Sergeant Major Lopez served for 32 years and received several awards including: the Silver Star Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal, Soldiers Medal, Purple Heart and several others.