



**SERGEANT MAJOR MIKE R. VINING (RETIRED)**  
**UNITED STATES ARMY**

Mike Roger Vining was born in Greenville, Michigan on 12 August 1950 to Roger and Arlene Vining. He graduated from Tri-County High School in 1968 and enlisted in the Army in July of 1968.

After completing Basic Training at Fort Knox, Kentucky, he attended the Ammunition Renovation Course, at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama. Sergeant Major Vining completed the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Program, Indianhead, Maryland in May of 1969 and reported to the Technical Escort Unit, Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland during which time he completed the Nuclear Weapons Disposal Course. In 1970 he deployed to the Republic of Vietnam where he was assigned to the 99th Ordnance Detachment (EOD), Phuoc Vinh. Upon completion of 12 months of combat duty, Sergeant Major Vining was honorably discharged from the United States Army on February 1971.

Sergeant Major Vining reentered the Army in 1973 and was assigned to the 63rd Ordnance Detachment (EOD), Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. In 1978, he was accepted to the 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment (SFOD) - Delta, where he served with distinction until 1985. He completed the first Operator Training Course, subsequently participating in numerous combat operations including Operation EAGLE CLAW, the Iranian Hostage Rescue Mission and Operation URGENT FURY, the invasion of Grenada. From 1985 to 1986 he was assigned to the 176th Ordnance Detachment (EOD), Fort Richardson, Alaska. He then returned to 1st SFOD - Delta from 1986 to 1992 where he served as Chief EOD Technician, Research and Development Sergeant Major, and Breaching Sergeant Major. During this tour he deployed in support of Operation DESERT STORM, Saudi Arabia. He served as Exercise Planner at the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) from 1992 to 1996. During Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY, Sept-Oct of 1994, he served as the Senior Enlisted Advisor for the Joint Special Operations Task Force aboard the Aircraft Carrier U.S.S. America (CV-66) off the coast of Haiti.

He served as the Explosives Expert on the Downing Assessment Task Force, which investigated the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Sergeant Major Vining's last tour of duty was as the Joint Special Operations Command J-3 Special Plans Sergeant Major. Sergeant Major Vining retired from the Army, 31 January 1999.

Sergeant Major Vining's awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit Medal, Bronze Star Medal, two Defense Meritorious Service Medals, the Army Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, two Joint Service Achievement Medals, the Army Achievement Medal, nine Good Conduct Medals, two National Defense Service Medals, two Armed Forces Expeditionary Medals, the Vietnam Service Medal with three Campaign stars, the Southwest Asia Service Medal, two Humanitarian Service Medals, the Republic of

Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Liberation and Defense of Kuwait Medal, two Joint Meritorious Unit Awards, the Valorous Unit Award, the Meritorious Unit commendations, and the Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm Unit Citation. He is authorized to wear the Combat Infantry Badge, the Master Explosive Ordnance Disposal Badge, the Parachutist Badge, the Military Free Fall Parachutist Badge, and the Austrian Police High Alpine "Gendarmerie-Hochalpinist" Badge.

Sergeant Major Vining holds a B.S. Degree in Sociology from the University of the State of New York. He is married to Donna Ikenberry and has two children, Terri and Lorri, and six grandchildren, Mitchell, Dillon, Kyle, Victor, McKinley, and Rainier. He currently resides with wife in South Fork, Colorado.