

UCF's Veterans Legacy Program



VA



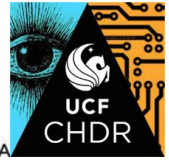
U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs
National Cemetery Administration



UCF

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Department
of History



Ricardo Seija

1981 – 2012

Staff Sergeant: US Army

Persian Gulf, Iraq, Afghanistan

*Please note that news articles published online often exist behind paywalls and require a subscription to access digitally. We have provided links, but have not reproduced them here. Similarly, many families have created remembrance pages. Again, we have provided links, but have not reproduced any images without express written permission from the family.

“Ricardo Seija,” *Dignity Memorial*, July 10, 2012 (accessed July 30, 2023).

<https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/tampa-fl/ricardo-seija-5167675>

An obituary for Ricardo Seija published by dignitymemorial.com, this source includes a photograph of Seija in his US Army uniform, as well as his birth and death dates.

José Patiño Girona and Howard Altman, “IED Kills Leto Graduate,” *Tampa Tribune*, July 11, 2012, 1 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/342466132/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

The above article, published by the *Tampa Tribune* shortly after Seija’s death, includes an interview with Seija’s mother in which she remembers her son as a hero who had wanted to defend his country as a soldier since childhood.

---, “Soldier,” *Tampa Tribune*, July 11, 2012, 6 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/342466163/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija>

This article continues the above article’s content from page one of the same edition.

Marlene Sokol and Robbyn Mitchell, “Afghanistan Roadside Bombing Claims Second Bay Area Soldier,” *Tampa Bay Times*, July 11, 2012, A1 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/364077813/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

Published just days after Ricardo Seija was killed by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan, this article includes quotations from Seija’s mother, where she describes the moment when two men in military uniforms arrived at her house to tell her that her son had died while serving.

---, “Second Area Soldier Dies in Bombing,” *Tampa Bay Times*, July 11, 2012, A7 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/364077943/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija>

This article continues the above article’s content from page A-one of the same edition.

“Quiet Respect for Two Bay Area Sons,” *Tampa Bay Times*, July 13, 2012, A1 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/364060144/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

Ricardo Seija and Clarence Williams III, both from the Tampa Bay area, were both killed in July 2012 by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan. This article remembers both Veterans, and includes a photograph of their remains as they are carried off a plane at Dover Air Force Base.

“Processions Pay Respect to Soldiers ,” *Tampa Bay Times*, July 16, 2012, B3 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/364091188/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

Published in the *Tampa Bay Times* about a week after Seija’s death, this article reports that the bodies of both Seija and Clarence Williams III, who also hails from the Tampa Bay area and who died in the same roadside blast that killed Seija, will be honored during a procession in Tampa. Each of their bodies, the article reports, will be escorted down Bayshore Boulevard before their funerals.

US Representative Kathy Castor, “Honoring Staff Sergeant Ricardo Seija,” uploaded on July 17, 2012, YouTube video, 01:24.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W2IhX2MayLw>

In this YouTube video, US Representative Kathy Castor, who represents the Tampa Bay area in Congress, remembers Ricardo Seija on the floor of Congress nine days after he died.

Kathleen Flynn, “Fallen Soldiers Return Home,” *CHRON*, July 17, 2012 (accessed July 30, 2023).

<https://www.chron.com/news/nation-world/slideshow/Fallen-soldiers-return-home-46085.php>

The above link navigates to an online article detailing the return of both Ricardo Seija’s and Clarence Williams III’s remains to FL after their deaths in a roadside bombing in Afghanistan. The article includes a collection of photographs depicting Seija’s and Williams III’s families as they meet their loved ones’ caskets at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa.

“Ceremonies Planned for Slain Soldiers,” *Tampa Tribune*, July 17, 2012, 15 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/342471088/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

An article announcing the dates set for the funeral ceremonies of both Ricardo Seija and Clarence Williams III, who were killed in the same roadside bombing in Afghanistan on July 8, 2012. The article mentions that each will have processions led through downtown Tampa Bay to honor their lives and sacrifices.

Sarah Curran, “Dozens of Red Cross Members Show their Support for Fallen Soldier Ricardo Seija,” *WUSF Public Media*, July 17, 2012 (accessed July 30, 2023).

<https://wusfnews.wusf.usf.edu/american-homefront/2012-07-17/dozens-of-red-cross-members-show-their-support-for-fallen-soldier-ricardo-seija>

The above article reports on the procession for Ricardo Seija that went through downtown Tampa before Seija’s funeral and burial at Florida National Cemetery. It includes an interview with the CEO of the Tampa Chapter of the Red Cross, Linda Carbone, who mentions that about a dozen Red Cross volunteers attended Seija’s procession.

“Ricardo Seija Obituary,” *Legacy*, July 18, 2012 (accessed July 30, 2023).

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/elpasotimes/name/ricardo-seija-obituary?id=21175268>

This source is an obituary for Ricardo Seija, published on Legacy.com, which includes a brief paragraph detailing Seija’s military unit and age when he died. It also includes a comments section, where numerous people have left notes honoring Seija’s life and sacrifice.

Tony Marrero, “Music, Praise Fill Air at Service for Fallen Soldier,” *Tampa Bay Times*, July 18, 2012, B8 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/364091915/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

Although this article focuses much of its content on the life, death, and funeral of Clarence Williams III, it also mentions Seija, who was killed in the same roadside bombing in Afghanistan as Williams III.

Kathleen Flynn, "Preparing for a Final Salute," *Tampa Bay Times*, July 18, 2012, A1 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/364081193/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

The above link navigates to a brief newspaper article which provides information on Seija's death and the return of his remains to FL ten days later. This article also includes a photograph of Seija in his Army uniform, and a larger photograph depicting Seija's wife and son as they look on at Seija's casket at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa.

Caitlin Johnston and Marissa Lang, "Fallen Tampa Soldier Honored," *Tampa Bay Times*, July 18, 2012, B1 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/364121875/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

An article detailing the funeral procession for Ricardo Seija through downtown Tampa Bay, held about a week after his death. This article includes quotations from members of Seija's family, and mentions that his family emigrated from Colombia to the US.

---, "Procession Honors Fallen Soldier," *Tampa Bay Times*, July 18, 2012, B8 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/364122927/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija>

This article continues the above article's content from page B-one of the same edition.

Howard Altman and Chip Osowski, "Comrades Mourned," *Tampa Tribune*, July 19, 2012, 13 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/342472774/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

The above article provides a brief description of Seija's funeral service at Florida National Cemetery, and includes a photograph of his widow, Sunny, standing in front of her husband's casket.

---, "Comrades Mourned," *Tampa Tribune*, July 19, 2012, 16 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/342472796/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija>

This article continues the above article's content from page thirteen of the same edition.

Molly Larmie, "Remembering a Fallen Soldier," *Tampa Bay Times*, July 22, 2012, B1 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/364092568/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

An article which remembers the death of Clarence Williams III, this piece also mentions Ricardo Seija, who, like Williams III, hailed from the Tampa Bay area and died in the same roadside bombing on July 8, 2012 in Afghanistan.

HCSO Sheriff, "A Tribute to US Army Staff Sgt. Ricardo Seija," uploaded on August 15, 2012, YouTube video, 01:00:03.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_4BH2wViYE

Uploaded by the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, this YouTube video depicts Seija's escort through downtown Tampa Bay and part of his funeral. Seija's wife, son, and fellow servicemen pay their respects at his casket in the video.

"In Memoriam: Tampa Bay Area Military Who Died in 2012 in Afghanistan," *Tampa Tribune*, December 31, 2012, 10 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/343086636/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

A short list of Tampa Bay-area Veterans who died in 2012, including Seija.

"Dolor," *Tampa Tribune*, March 29, 2013, 5 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/343099543/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

This article, published in Spanish about a year after Seija's death, includes a photograph of his parents as they receive an award honoring their son.

Myriam Silva-Warren, "Extrañando a Ricky," *Tampa Tribune*, May 24, 2013, 1 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/343102421/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija>

The above article, published over Memorial Day Weekend the year following Seija's death, honors Seija's memory and includes a photograph of his parents. Published in Spanish, this article reflects the Seija family's cultural background as immigrants from Colombia.

"Remembering the Fallen Heroes from Hillsborough," *Tampa Bay Times*, May 26, 2013, T6 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/364478767/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

This article, published over Memorial Day Weekend, 2013, lists Veterans from Hillsborough County, FL who died while serving in Iraq or Afghanistan since 2003, including Ricardo Seija.

"In Memoriam: In Loving Memory of SSG Ricky Seija MP May 21, 1981-July 8, 2012," *Tampa Tribune*, July 8, 2013, 25 (accessed August 25, 2023).

<https://www.newspapers.com/image/343117215/?terms=Ricardo%20Seija&match=1>

A memorial in the *Tampa Tribune*, published on the one year anniversary of Seija's death, which includes a photograph of Seija, his birth and death dates, and mention of his surviving family members.

"Six Fort Bliss Soldiers Killed in Afghanistan Honored at Memorial," *ABC7 KVIA*, February 10, 2014, (accessed July 30, 2023).

<https://kvia.com/news/2014/02/10/six-fort-bliss-soldiers-killed-in-afghanistan-honored-at-memorial/>

The link above navigates to an online article published in February 2014, less than two years after Seija died in Afghanistan, and provides information about a memorial service held at Fort Bliss, in El Paso, TX to commemorate Seija and the five other US Veterans who died in a roadside bombing. The article includes a brief paragraph about all six fallen soldiers.

Nate Rawlings, “Honoring the Fallen: One Photographer’s Witness to 490 Dignified Transfers,” *Time*, May 26, 2014 (accessed July 28, 2023).

<https://time.com/3799840/honoring-the-fallen-one-photographers-witness-to-490-dignified-transfers/>

This photo essay, published online on *Time* Magazine’s website, includes photographs of fallen Veterans as their caskets containing their remains return to the US via Dover Air Force Base. The essay includes over two hundred photographs, including one of Seija’s remains as six men in military uniforms carry his casket off of a plane. The photograph depicting Seija’s transfer is on page 144.

Master Sgt. Kap Kim, “Deployed MPs Honor Fallen Comrades with Run,” *US Army*, July 17, 2014 (accessed July 30, 2023).

https://www.army.mil/article/130078/deployed_mps_honor_fallen_comrades_with_run

In July 2014, two years after Ricardo Seija and five other US Veterans died in a roadside bombing, members of the 202nd Military Police Company organized a 10K relay race to commemorate their fallen comrades. This article details the race and honors the memories of these six soldiers.

“Ricardo Seija,” *Iraq/Afghanistan War Heroes*, accessed July 30, 2023.

<https://iraqwarheroes.org/2012/seijar.htm>

This online memorial page honors Ricardo Seija and his sacrifice to his country. It includes several photographs of Seija in his Army uniform, and also provides information about the unit he served with, the circumstances of his death, and his military rank. It also reproduces two obituaries previously published by the *El Paso Times* and *WFTS Tampa Bay ABC TV*.

“U.S., Veterans’ Gravesites, ca. 1775-2019,” database, *Fold3* (fold3.com: accessed July 30, 2023), entry for Ricardo Seija.

<https://www.fold3.com/record/716790048/seija-ricardo-us-veterans-gravesites-ca1775-2019>

Indexed at the military records database Fold3.com, this source provides information on Seija's gravesite location at Florida National Cemetery.

"Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) Casualties," database, *Fold3* (fold3.com: accessed July 30, 2023), entry for Ricardo Seija.

<https://www.fold3.com/record/630021726/ricardo-seija-operation-enduring-freedom-oef-casualties>

A casualty listing for Ricardo Seija, indexed at the military records database Fold3.com. This source provides information on Seija's military unit, rank, date and place of death, and residence location in the US.

"Texas, U.S., Marriage Index, 1824-2019," database, *Ancestry* (ancestry.com: accessed July 30, 2023), entry for Ricardo Seija, El Paso, TX: 2012.

<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/50653920:8795>

The above is a digital source from the Texas Marriage Index, held at Ancestry.com. It provides details regarding Seija's marriage to Sunny Vang on March 9, 2012, just four months before his death.

"Honor the Fallen: Army Staff Sgt. Ricardo Seija," *Military Times*, 2018, accessed July 30, 2023.

<https://thefallen.militarytimes.com/army-staff-sgt-ricardo-seija/6568254>

The *Military Times*' Honor the Fallen project aims to commemorate Veterans who died while serving their country. Seija's page includes information on the circumstances of his death, as well as his military unit and rank. It also provides the names of the other five Veterans who lost their lives in the same roadside bombing that killed Seija. Their names are Army Spc. Erica P. Aleksen, Army Spc. Clarence Williams III, Army Spc. Trevor B. Adkins, Army Spc. Alejandro J. Pardo, and Army Spc. Cameron J. Stambaugh.

“SSGT Ricardo Seija,” *FindAGrave*, July 10, 2012 (accessed July 30, 2023).

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/93425575/ricardo-seija>

Ricardo Seija’s page on findagrave.com includes information on his birth and death dates, military service, and burial location. It includes a brief paragraph describing his life and death in a roadside bombing in Afghanistan, which also killed five other US Veterans. The page also includes a selection of photographs which depict Seija in his military uniform, as well as his headstone at Florida National Cemetery. As of August 2023, twenty-nine people had left digital flowers on his page, which honor Seija’s memory and service to his country.



Ricardo Seija's Headstone in Florida National Cemetery

UCF Veterans Legacy Program, *Headstone for Ricardo Seija*, photograph, 2023, Florida National Cemetery, Bushnell, FL.