

Sharri Briley

Sharri Briley is the surviving spouse of CWO3 Donovan Lee 'Bull' Briley, an Army Special Operations Blackhawk helicopter pilot who tragically lost his life in Mogadishu, Somalia during Operation Gothic Serpent while providing aviation support to the ground forces that were a part of a United Nations peacekeeping mission objective at the time in 1993. Donovan and his fellow soldiers' actions inspired the movie *Black Hawk Down* and his story of service continues to be told today as he was the co-pilot of the first Blackhawk helicopter #324 that was shot down by a rocket-propelled grenade.



CWO3 Donovan Briley was initially awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for gallantry in action during combat operations in Mogadishu, Somalia on 3 Oct 1993 during Operation Gothic Serpent. His actions as the co-pilot of an assault into a highly contested urban objective were heroic. Later, following the advocacy of his spouse, Sharri, and his fellow comrade, Donovan's Distinguished Flying Cross was upgraded to a Silver Star. He was also awarded a Purple Heart and two Air Medals/one with "V" Device.

Following her husband's death, Sharri Briley has made it her mission to honor fallen servicemembers by ensuring the families left behind receive the survivor benefits they have earned. Sharri Briley has been a dedicated mother to their daughter, Jordan who was five at the time of her father's death. She has been active with "Gold Star Spouses of America" a national non-profit organization to honor and remember our fallen heroes. Sharri has four grandchildren and currently works for the State of Arkansas as a fiscal support coordinator for the office of finance, accounts receivable.

October 3, 2025, marked 32 years since Donovan's tragic death.

