

## **Thomas J. McGrath '68**

### **Humanitarian Award**

When TJ McGrath, a 1995 graduate of West Point, was killed in an accident at the Army Ranger training school in Fort Hood Texas in November 1996, his mother and father and brother were devastated. It would take some time and some healing before they could discover a way to adequately honor the fallen hero in their family. Eventually Tom McGrath, '68 determined the best way to honor his son's sacrifice was to continue his legacy of unselfish service by establishing the 2nd Lt. TJ McGrath Charitable Foundation to assist families and organizations in need in and around their home town of Reading, Massachusetts. The foundation focuses in a special way on military families in the area. Whether it is providing the funding to make sure flowers and flags are provided on all veterans' graves, or offering assistance to a military family in need, the McGrath Foundation offers caring, kindness, and faithful support as a fitting memorial to TJ and his sacrifice for his country. The work of the foundation has also had one additional benefit that Tom McGrath could not have predicted. His loyalty and affection for his son has been matched by the loyalty and affection of his classmates for Tom and his family. The annual golf tournament that is the main source of revenue for the Foundation has become an annual late summer mini-reunion for the class of 1968. The fact that sixteen members of that class have come together to nominate Tom for this award in the year of their 50th reunion is a show of solidarity that cannot be ignored. For his enduring support and faithfulness to his alma mater, for his courage to help convert the heartfelt loss of his family into a way to serve and support others, and for his fostering of goodwill and fellowship among his classmates, the Alumni Association is pleased to honor Tom McGrath with the 2018 Humanitarian Award.