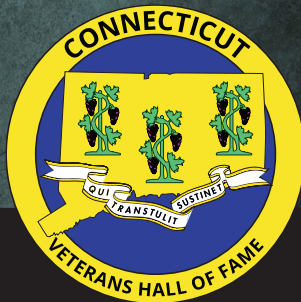
An American flag is partially visible on the left side of the image, showing the stars and stripes. The background is a dark, textured grey.

Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame

CLASS OF 2023
INDUCTION CEREMONY



January 25, 2024



CONNECTICUT VETERANS HALL OF FAME 2023 INDUCTION CLASS

January 25, 2024

Dear Veterans, families, and friends:



I am honored to join you tonight to recognize the Connecticut residents whose outstanding achievements have inspired us and left a lasting legacy of service for generations to come.

These 2023 Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame inductees served their state and their country honorably in the Armed Forces, and then went on to do the same in cities and towns across the state. They have dedicated themselves to building thriving communities and a stronger Connecticut.

We are grateful to the Class of 2023 and all of the members of the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame for their brave and patriotic service, leadership and commitment to improving the lives of others.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Bysiewicz". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Susan Bysiewicz
Lieutenant Governor



CONNECTICUT VETERANS HALL OF FAME 2023 INDUCTION CLASS



Dear Service Members, Veterans,
Families, and Friends:

It is truly my honor to join Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz, CT National Guard Adjutant General, Fran Evon, and members of the 2023 CT Hall of Fame Executive Committee to this exceptional ceremony as 12 distinguished Veterans are inducted into the 19th Class of the CT Veterans Hall of Fame.

On behalf of our dedicated staff of professionals at the Connecticut Department of Veteran Affairs we congratulate you on your honorable service and lifelong accomplishments. You made a significant impact during your military service, and then pledged unwavering commitment, service, and volunteerism to our communities, including persistent, compassionate support and advocacy to our Service members, Veterans and Families in our great state of Connecticut and beyond. With gratitude and in celebration, we welcome you into the Class of 2023 of the CT Veterans Hall of Fame!

Very Respectfully,

Ron Welch
Commissioner,
Brigadier General, USA (Ret.)

History



The Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame was established to increase the awareness of the lifetime contributions of Veterans after completion of honorable military service. The Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame is not a military hall of fame. Those selected for the honor of induction are Veterans who honorably served their country through military service and who continue to serve

and inspire their fellow man with their deeds and accomplishments throughout their lifetime.

Each year the committee selects inductees from applications received from across the state and nation. These Veterans will be leaders in a variety of areas, such as arts, education, public service, volunteer activities, and community and business leadership to name a few. Most importantly, they will have made significant impacts on the lives of others and their communities.

To be eligible for the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame, the nominee must have served their country honorably in a branch of military service and continued to serve their communities, state and nation after discharge. Because so many of America's Veterans continue to give to their communities, state and nation after honorable military service, the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame seeks to recognize them for their countless contributions to society.

The Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame is administered by the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs and the Connecticut Military Department on behalf of the Office of the Governor.

The first class of the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame was inducted in November 2005 and includes the 41st President of the United States, George Herbert Walker Bush.

In 2015, a plaque was unveiled and placed in the Legislative Office Building with the names of all inductees of the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame since 2005. Each future class of inductees will be named on this plaque.



JOHN MICHAEL CHAN

Avon

U.S. AIR FORCE

John Michael Chan was born on August 24, 1948. He enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in Honolulu, Hawaii in 1968 after graduating high school. Following basic training, he attended technical school at Chanut Air Force Base, Illinois, receiving his certificate as a Flight Simulator Specialist. Following tech school, John was assigned to the 6200 Air Wing, Clark Air Base, the Philippines, serving as an instructor on instrument flying, emergency procedures, and tactics in the F-100, F-4 and C-130 aircraft. John was also responsible for teaching pilots bombing tactics using Air to Ground Missiles. In 1971, he became a crew chief on the C-130, flying missions into Vietnam from Clark Air Base. In 1972, he returned to United States where he instructed pilots on the A-7 aircraft. In 1974, John had earned enough college credits to compete for the highly competitive Airmen's Education and Commission Program (AECMP) and was accepted. He was to attend Louisiana Tech University, earning his Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering Management. Upon graduation from Officer Training School in 1976, John returned to Chanut Air Force Base to serve as an Aircraft Maintenance Officer. John's stateside assignments as a maintenance officer included Luke AFB, AZ, Pease AFB, NH. His overseas assignments included Royal Air Force Base Richmond, Sydney, Australia and Taegu Air Base, South Korea. He served as a maintenance officer for the F-15, F-16, C-141, F-4, and F-86. John also completed a n assignment as a munitions officer at NATO

Italian Ghedi Air Base. John retired from the United States Air Force as a Captain in 1988 following a serious injury sustained in an aircraft accident.

Upon retiring, he accepted a position as Integrated Logistics Systems Manager at Kaman Aerospace in Bloomfield. He moved to Avon, CT where he has resided since then. John is a life member of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and member of The American Legion. He has developed many historical and educational programs to preserve the memorial of the sacrifices of those who fought or lost their lives in the defense of our freedom. John has devoted his life to helping those in need, and mostly for fellow Veterans and their families. For the last six years, he has refurbished Durable Medical Equipment to donate to needy Veterans, through his "Heroes on Wheels" program. His program has helped thousands of Veterans throughout Connecticut with manual and motorized wheelchairs, wheelchair ramps, motorized scooters, hospital beds, oxygen concentrators, walkers, etc. These gifts have helped restore the mobility and quality of life for those that John has had the privilege to help.

John is married to Sally MacDougal, formerly from Ticonderoga, NY. Without Sally's understanding, encouragement, and help, John could not incur the monetary expense and devote the time needed to accomplish his work for the veterans.



MICHAEL JOHN DALTON

Waterbury

U.S. ARMY

Michael J. Dalton was drafted into the United States Army at the age of 18 and served for three years, including a one-year tour in Vietnam. Michael had the option of returning to Ireland and not serving, he made the decision to not leave and enlist. Michael's unselfish decision led him to experience twelve months of continuous life-threatening combat leadership assignments, functions, and roles including service on the Ho Chi Minh convoys and during the Tet Offensive Battle of Hue. Michael was discharged from the Army with the rank of Specialist Five.

Michael is a lifelong resident of Waterbury. He is a citizen with exemplary moral character beyond reproach and an unwavering commitment to country, state, and city. He has spent most of his adult life as an advocate for the Veteran community. His advocacy for Veterans over the years has entailed several leadership roles including Originator/Director of the Veterans Headstone/Tombstone Restoration Project honoring all deceased servicemembers, and the Veterans Affairs Contact Person for the City of Waterbury, managing communication with Veterans, their families, caregivers, survivors, supporting entities, and the public. Additionally, Michael is a member of the Army Historical Foundation, which fundraises to educate future Americans to fully appreciate the sacrifices that generations of American

Soldiers have made to safeguard the freedoms of this nation, and the Wounded Warrior Project, which offers a variety of no-cost programs, services, and events for wounded Veterans and Veteran families. Michael is a subscribing Life Member of the NAACP Greater Waterbury Adult Branch. Mr. Dalton is an avid supporter of Paralyzed Veterans of America, an organization that empowers our disabled heroes to live more independent and fulfilling lives. He is a member of Vietnam Veterans of America, which promotes and supports the full range of issues important to Vietnam Veterans, including the creation of a new identity for our current generation of Veterans. Michael's role as a community activist is rooted in volunteerism and dedicated to making a better world that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive. He is a Salvation Army volunteer and oversees the collection and distribution of donated items for homeless Veterans. Mr. Dalton is the Chairperson/Co-Founder of Mayor O'Leary's Kids Marathon Program and sits on the Board of Directors for New England Mentorship Corporation. As a committed public servant, Michael served as Waterbury's City Clerk for nine (9) consecutive 2-Year Terms.



RICHARD GUIDO DIFEDERICO JR.
Oakville

U.S. NAVY

Richard G. DiFederico Jr. enlisted in the United States Navy in 1981 following his graduation from Watertown High school. In 1983, while assigned to the U.S. Multi-National Force- Beirut he was involved in the Marine Barracks bombing. (USMNF) in Beirut (Bombing), Lebanon. He was also involved in United States' operations in Nicaragua in 1988 and served in Honduras.

After his Navy service, Richard returned to his hometown where he met and married his wife and raised two children. Richard was elected to the local Town Council and served several terms making the community a better place for all. Mr. DiFederico is a member of VFW Post 7330 in Oakville, serving in several positions including Post Commander. Mr. DiFederico is a three-time VFW State Commander, the first and only person to do so. Richard has been a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars for over 30 years. Since 2000, he has been a

National Disabled American Veterans Service Officer and Veterans of Foreign Wars Service Officer. He continues to serve as Watertown's Municipal Veteran's Representative, helping veterans and their families with benefits, resources, and questions. In 2005, he was given a plaque in honor of the number of veterans (7,330) he has assisted over the years. A grateful Veteran gave Richard the special license plate "VFW7330" to express gratitude for all that Mr. DiFederico does to support his fellow brother and sister Veterans.

Richard was honored for his commitment to excellence in the community with a plaque on the Watertown High School Wall of Honor in 2021. He has served as the VFW Voice of Democracy/Patriot Pen Essay Contest Chairman for over 10 years.



MAURICE JOSEPH FRADETTE
Farmington

U.S. NAVY

Maurice "Moe" Fradette has always welcomed opportunities to serve community and country. After graduating from Farmington High School, he attended the University of Connecticut where he served on the Student Senate and was President of his fraternity and the University's Inter-Fraternity Council. After graduating in 1964, he followed the example of his older brothers who had served in the Army and Navy and entered the U.S. Navy and attended Officer Candidate School at Newport, RI. He received his commission in 1965 and completed Communications and Cryptography Systems training

Moe's initial assignment was to the USS Power (DD-839). While aboard the Power, he served as Electronics Material Officer, CIC Officer, Navigator, and OOD Underway. In 1965, the Power served as part of the recovery team for Gemini 6 & 7. Power completed Mediterranean cruises in 1966 and 1967 serving with the 6th Fleet. Her 1966 deployment included transit of the Suez Canal and Red Sea to serve with Middle East Forces. In January 1968 he left the USS Power and returned to Connecticut as a Reservist and to this day still maintains communications with fellow shipmates.

In 1973, Moe married his wife Suzanne and they moved to West Hartford to raise their family before moving to Farmington in 2021. Moe's professional career was in technology sales as a Global Account Manager for Nortel Networks, where he received multiple awards for sales achievements. As a member

of St. Peter Claver Church, West Hartford, he served as Trustee for 15 years. In 1973, as a Veteran, a title he is very proud of, he joined the American Legion Hayes-Velhage Post 96 in West Hartford to assist in the support of the Vietnam Moving Wall's visit to West Hartford. As an active member of Post 96 he has served multiple terms as Post Commander, Vice Commander, and currently serves as Post 96 Adjutant and editor of the Post's newsletter. In 2011, he organized and headed a committee to plan and execute a weeklong tribute to over 600 WWII Veterans, "The Greatest Generation", residing in West Hartford. The Memorial Day parade that year, in honor of the WWII Veterans, attracted one of the largest crowds in the history of the parade. In 2015, he met with the West Hartford Public Schools Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent to discuss a program to recognize high school seniors choosing to enter military service. The event was given full support by the West Hartford Public Schools and the initial Inductees Ceremony was held in 2016. The event, attended by the Inductees and their parents, provides an opportunity for Inductees to be recognized for their commitment to serve. The Military Inductees Ceremony is held annually on the Tuesday following Memorial Day and over 175 graduates have been formally recognized. When Hayes-Velhage Post 96 celebrated its Centennial in 2022, he helped plan the Post's Centennial promotions and Centennial Banquet.



MICHAEL SALVATORE GOZZO
Hamden

U.S. MARINE CORPS

Michael "Mike" Gozzo is a 1979 Graduate of Bassick High School in Bridgeport. During high school he participated in the Boy Scouts of America and later became a cubmaster within the organization. He joined the cross country and track teams, which he used as a springboard to prepare for the Marine Corps. Mike enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1979 and completed recruit training at San Diego, CA.

Mike's first duty location was Camp Lejeune, North Carolina as a legal clerk followed by assignments in Okinawa, Japan, Quantico, Virginia, and back to San Diego, CA for Recruiting school. Mike served as a recruiter in Hartford, CT from 1984-1988. He returned to Quantico and completed Advance Combat training in 1990, followed by a tour of duty in support of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Following his service in Desert Shield/Desert Storm, now SSgt Gozzo Mike returned to Camp Lejeune, serving with Marine Corps Security Forces Battalion. Norfolk, VA.

Gunnery Sergeant Gozzo retired in January 2000. His personal awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, two Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, Kuwait Liberation Medal (SA), Kuwait Liberation Medal (KU), and the Combat Action Ribbon.

Mike graduated from Park College (Parkville, MO) (BS- Management), and Old Dominion University (Norfolk, VA) (MS- Education) while in the Marine Corps. He later earned a second master's degree (History) from Southern Connecticut State University.

Mike started his career as an educator following his retirement, becoming a substitute and later a full-time teacher in Virginia. Mike taught in the Norfolk and Hampton public schools until June, 2006 when he accepted a position with the Derby Public Schools, currently serving as an 8th grade social studies teacher.

Mike was a central figure in constructing the middle school cross country and track programs. In addition, for the past 14 years, he volunteers his winters as an advisor for the Derby Middle School Running Club and summers with the Derby Parks and Recreation Running Club. In 2015 he helped establish the Bella Vita Foundation. The foundation awards an annual scholarship to worthy Derby High School graduate to help navigate their future. Mike was selected as the 2018 Teacher of the Year for Derby Public Schools and is dedicated to supporting his students academically and athletically.



RICHARD THOMAS CHRISTOPHER
LEFAVE
Voluntown

U.S. ARMY

Richard "Dick" LeFave was born in Everett, Massachusetts on December 9, 1951. He graduated and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Army Medical Service Corps from Boston University.

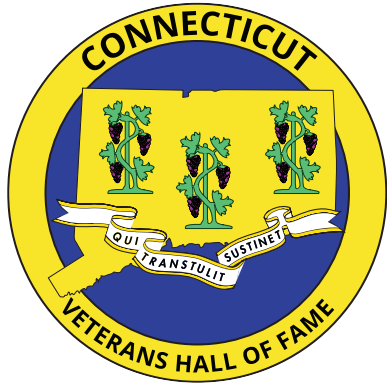
During Dick's active military service, he was deployed for Operation New Life, supporting the evacuation of refugees from Vietnam. He was assigned as the Executive Officer of a combat medical company in Korea. His final Army assignment on active duty was as a Company Commander in the 9th Medical Battalion, 9th Infantry Division. Dick left active duty in 1978 and served in the Army National Guard in both Washington and Massachusetts, achieving the rank of Major. His awards include Meritorious Service Medal (2), the Army Commendation Medal (2), the Humanitarian Service Medal, the Korean Service Defense Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Expert Field Medical Badge. He is a recipient of the Connecticut Wartime Service Medal.

Dick left active military duty in 1978, taking a position with the Boeing Company in Seattle, WA. He returned to New England and settled in Massachusetts where he held various leadership positions in technology, including as the Chief Information Officer with Southern New England Telephone,

and Nextel/Sprint Telecommunications. He is a board member of Amdocs Computer Corporation, a Fortune 500 technology provider. Dick runs his own technology consulting firm, D+L Partners, LLC which provides consulting services to global companies.

Dick attended the Harvard Business School, Advanced Management Program in 2003. Dick is a published author on technology, management, and photography.

After a stay in Guilford, the LeFave's chose to relocate to Voluntown, Connecticut to an old farm where he and his family have resided since. He married Linda Greenlaw in 1973 and has shared his journey with her as a true-life partner. The family grew to include three talented children and 6 grandchildren of their own. The LeFave's recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in September 2023. Dick and his family have provided volunteer support in Cambodia for 8 years where they engage in house construction and the opportunity to help and support an underprivileged population. He is dedicated to providing technology leadership and service to help the citizens of Connecticut and those disadvantaged in foreign countries. Giving forward has been a major tenant of his legacy.



CONNECTICUT VETERANS HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023 INDUCTION CEREMONY

JANUARY 25, 2024

ENTRANCE OF THE OFFICIAL PARTY
MASTER OF CEREMONIES
USMC VETERAN GIL SIMMONS
MORNING METEOROLOGIST WTNH/NEWS8

**REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION OF THE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR**
RONALD P. WELCH
COMMISSIONER, DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ANTHEM
2LT JOSEPH COLAVITO, FORMALLY OF THE
102ND ARMY BAND

REMARKS
THE HONORABLE SUSAN BYSIEWICZ
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
AND MOMENT OF SILENCE**

INDUCTION—CLASS OF 2023
LT. GOVERNOR SUSAN BYSIEWICZ
COMMISSIONER RONALD P. WELCH
MAJOR GENERAL FRAN EVON

INVOCATION
CHAPLAIN, CAPT CH SETH JOHNSON

BENEDICTION
CHAPLAIN, CAPT CH SETH JOHNSON

*Light refreshments will be available immediately following the program in the
Department of Veterans Affairs Gold Star Families Memorial Auditorium.*



DANIEL BERNARD REILLY
Torrington

U.S. AIR FORCE

Daniel Bernard Reilly is a resident of Torrington, Connecticut. He served over 24 years as an enlisted civil engineer in the 103d Civil Engineer Squadron. As a civil engineer, he served with distinction and a high level of professional competence, leadership, and enthusiasm. He was instrumental in the 103d Civil Engineer Squadron's sustained record of excellence. He is a Veteran of deployments to numerous named operations around the world including Southern Watch, Noble Eagle, Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, and Unified Response. Additionally, Dan served extensively in the National Guard Counter Narcotics Program, working tirelessly on both drug demand and supply reduction efforts. Dan retired from the U. S. Airforce and the Connecticut Air National Guard in May, 2022.

Daniel B. Reilly is employed by AmeriTech Contracting as the Vice President of Business Development. His background in construction, plumbing, mechanical specialties, project management, and his industry experience as a general and operations manager for premier mechanical companies has allowed him to accomplish improved program delivery timelines and quality improvements with increased team efficiencies, resulting in millions of dollars of annual savings. His people-focused, collaborative approach is contagious while providing much-needed solutions to address the organization's needs, objectives, and challenges. Daniel's innovative business acumen led to his recognition and inclusion in Stanford's Who's Who of executives, entrepreneurs, and professionals.

In addition to serving on multiple national nonprofit boards of directors, Dan is the President of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS). EANGUS serves over 450,000 members of the National Guard and over 480,000 retiree Veterans. In his role as the EANGUS President, Dan advises senior DOD leaders and elected officials on the readiness, employment, quality of life, health care, and compensation on behalf of almost one million current and former enlisted servicemembers. He routinely provides expert testimony to various Congressional committees, including the Armed Forces and Appropriations Committee.

Dan holds an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Mechanical and Electrical Technology and a Professional Managers Certification from the Community College of the Air Force. Daniel is a graduate of the Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans (EBV) Program at the University of Connecticut's School of Business. Dan serves as the chair for the leadership development Community of Interest (COI) for the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME).

He attributes his drive for success solely to his four beautiful children, Aunchlee, Hunter, Aydan, and Bradley. His other passions are his extensive philanthropic work, nonprofit volunteerism, and altruistic manner of serving those who have served. Daniel is enthusiastic about the entrepreneurial spirit, assisting and collaborating with VSOBs and SDVOSBs.



WILLIAM FORD LAW RODGERS
Newtown

U.S. MARINE CORPS

William F.L. Rodgers was born and raised in Massachusetts and has resided in Connecticut since 1985. He has lived in Newtown since 1992. He graduated from Phillips Academy, Andover, MA, then received his B.A. and A.M. degrees concurrently from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, PA, followed by his J.D. from Boston University School of Law in Boston, MA. He is an attorney admitted to the CT, NY, and D.C. bars.

Colonel Rodgers joined the U.S. Marine Corps as a college sophomore and served tours of active duty in Quantico, VA, Newport, RI and Oceanside, CA. After his release from active duty, he returned to private practice in Connecticut and continued to serve as an active Marine Corps Reservist in military law billets in Washington D.C. In 2006, Colonel Rodgers volunteered to serve in Iraq and was deployed from August, 2006 to March, 2007, serving as a Liaison Officer between the Marine Corps and the United States Agency for International Development. He was

awarded the Bronze Star at the completion of his tour. His final tour after return home was as an Appellate Military Judge for the Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals. He retired in 2009 after 30 years of service.

Colonel Rodgers has been active in local politics, serving as both the Chair of Newtown's Legislative Council for six years and on its Board of Selectmen for eight years. After the Sandy Hook shooting, he helped create and run the largest charity to emerge, the Sandy Hook Community Foundation. On the State level, he served as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, advising the Commissioner of Veteran Affairs. Colonel Rodgers is married to Moira Buckley Rodgers, also an attorney and former Probate Judge. They have a married daughter, Amelia, an attorney in CA, and two granddaughters.



LORENZO ANTHONY SANTAMARIA
Guilford

U.S. MARINE CORPS

Lorenzo “Larry” Santamaria enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1968, served thirteen months of combat in Vietnam with the 1st Marine Division, and was awarded the Purple Heart.

Larry lives his life in service to others. His actions are driven by a selfless sense of duty for his community and a genuine concern for others. His long record of service to his fellow Veterans is extensive and noteworthy. Our ability to describe his accomplishments is severely limited by space.

He joined the Edward A. Norton VFW Post #7666 in 1971 and has served as its Commander since 1979. He has organized the Memorial Day Parade each year since 1979, along with ceremonies and services for Veteran’s Day, Pearl Harbor Day, 9/11 and other Veteran-specific events. During the ‘80s and ‘90s Larry initiated and helped to coordinate color guard services for funerals and ceremonies throughout the state as needed. In 1991, Larry was instrumental in reviving the American Legion Post #48 in Guilford. Larry is a member of the American Legion, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Marine Corps League, and the DAV.

Larry has worked on many community projects, including activities for the elderly, youth groups, and scout troops. Services include assisting, collecting, and distributing

food with the Guilford Thanksgiving and Christmas Food Baskets Committee (1985 – 2022).

As the kitchen chef for the Town of Guilford, he provided 40,000 meals annually, working on weekends and holidays, for the Interfaith Volunteers Meals on Wheels program and the Seniors Lunch Program, including evening senior events, dances, and movie nights. Under the fundraiser auspices of the Guilford Interfaith Ministry and Chef Larry, the Guilford Veterans Day Lasagna Dinner has annually welcomed Veterans for almost 20 years, for a complimentary dinner that raises money from all 200 paid participants. Larry is also the chef for the Guilford Rotary’s yearly Frosty 5K on New Year’s Day.

In recognition of his service to others, he has been awarded several honors, including the Guilford Rotary’s highest honor, the Paul Harris Award, and the Chamber of Commerce Volunteer of the Year Award. He was honored for his volunteer work for the town of Guilford with a proclamation from the Town naming “Larry Santamaria Day” and was recently presented with the Guilford Employee Recognition Award. Larry believes that serving others makes for a better community. Larry’s commitment to serving others has been well established in Guilford and throughout the state. Unquestionably, his service to others has impacted many lives.



CHARLES FERDINAND SMITH
Killingworth

U.S. AIR FORCE

Charles “Charlie” Smith grew up in Hamden and graduated from The Gunnery School in 1957 with 6 varsity letters. He continued his education at Franklin and Marshall College, graduating in 1961 with a B.A. in Sociology. There, he kept himself busy with Air Force ROTC, tennis, club hockey, and Chi Phi Fraternity.

Charlie was commissioned a Lieutenant in the United States Air Force. While in the Air Force he served as the Administrative Officer, in charge of a 7-bed dispensary in southern Italy. He was honorably discharged with the rank of Captain in 1966. Upon discharge, he remained on active reserve for a year, then inactive reserve until 1972.

The spirit of service has been a guiding light for Charlie since his days in the Air Force. Soon after moving to Killingworth, he helped form the Killingworth Ambulance Association and served as an EMT and CPR Instructor, a founding Board member, first President, and member on the Building Fund Committee. He assisted in the establishment of the Killingworth Chamber of Commerce. As a charter member of the Killingworth Lions Club, Charlie served in numerous positions, including as its 3rd President. Since 1972, he has been equally committed to the Killingworth Congregational Church where he served 12 years as a Trustee and in numerous other positions.

After retirement, Charlie became increasingly involved in Veterans’ advocacy. He has served as the Chair for the Killingworth Memorial Day Committee since 2017. Charlies has been an integral member of The Community Soup Kitchen (CSK) in New Haven, working to feed approximately 250 people, 5 days a week. Charlie helped initiate and served as the Chair of the CSK walkathon for 12 years and has raised over \$200,000.00 to date.

Fundraising is of keen interest to Charlie. In addition to his work with CSK, Charlie has helped raise over \$1.1 million for the Killingworth Town Library, more than \$440,000.00 for the Killingworth Congregational Church, and over \$100,000.00 for the Gunnery Alumni Association’ Gunn Scholars Program

Charlie was inducted into the Haddam-Killingworth Board of Education Hall of Fame after serving in multiple positions over 30 years, including as President.

The State of Connecticut and the Town of Killingworth have certainly become a better place because of Mr. Smith’s unending devotion to community service. His spirit of service is not just a notion, he has put his words into action from his time in Air Force ROTC to present day.



PETER CHARLES TRAGNI
Waterbury

U.S. ARMY

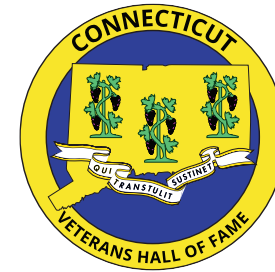
Peter Tragni joined the Connecticut Army National Guard in 1981 at the age of 17. He completed the basic combat medical specialist course and looked forward to a career in medical services. Fate deemed otherwise and Peter was chosen to attend airborne school as an R.O.T.C. cadet. He was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in Armored Cavalry at the age of 20 and took over as scout platoon leader in C Troop, 26 Cavalry, Connecticut Army National Guard. Peter soon transferred to the United States Army Reserve as a Civil Affairs Officer. When Desert Storm occurred, Peter was activated and commanded a Bradley Fighting Vehicle Scout Platoon in the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, and later retired as a captain. Peter was recently awarded The Order of Saint Maurice by The Infantry Association in recognition of his selfless dedication to soldiers mental health. Peter is very active in the 102nd Infantry Association, where he brings his collection of World War One military uniforms and equipment to displays and talks.

A career as a Danbury Police Officer started shortly after his service. As a Police Officer for 27 years, he taught D.A.R.E program and was a school resource officer, connecting with youth in positive ways. He became a trainer of Police Officers and School Resource Officers. As a Patrol Sergeant he helped train and guide new officers. Peter was a member of the Honor Guard, the critical incident

stress debriefing team, and recruitment team. Peter was selected by the Department of State in 2004 to become an International Police Liaison Officer in Iraq, where he trained, evaluated, and mentored the new Iraqi Police Force.

Upon his retirement as a police officer, Peter went back to school and earned a double masters in clinical mental health and school counseling. He became a licensed professional counselor (LPC) and a middle school guidance counselor. Peter works for the Military Support Program, which embeds licensed therapists in Connecticut National Guard Units. He works as an integral part of the unit providing mental health services for soldiers and their families.

As a school counselor in Waterbury public schools, he brings a real-world approach to connecting with students who come from very difficult backgrounds. Peter is on the Western Connecticut Regional School Crisis Team, which deploys to schools when a major incident occurs such as the death of a student or faculty member to render counseling services. He is a life member of VFW Post 149 and is currently in a doctoral program in Educational Leadership, with the vision of taking his military and police leadership experience to train school leaders in crisis situations.



CONNECTICUT VETERANS HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2023

John Michael Chan – U.S. Air Force - Avon

Michael John Dalton – U.S. Army - Waterbury

Richard Guido DiFederico Jr. – U.S. Navy - Oakville

Maurice Joseph Fradette – U.S. Navy - Farmington

Michael Salvatore Gozzo – U.S. Marine Corps - Hamden

Richard Thomas Christopher LeFave – U.S. Army - Voluntown

Daniel Bernard Reilly – U.S. Air Force - Torrington

William Ford Law Rodgers – U.S. Marine Corps - Newtown

Lorenzo Anthony Santamaria – U.S. Marine Corps - Guilford

Charles Ferdinand Smith – U.S. Air Force - Killingworth

Peter Charles Tragni – U.S. Army - Waterbury



CT VETERANS HALL OF FAME PAST INDUCTEES

CLASS of 2005

Nathan George Agostinelli
George Herbert Walker Bush
William Thomas Coffey, Sr.
Dr. Randall Howard Collins
Bruce Hulst Ey
Joseph G. Lombardo
Giacomo "Jack" Mordente II
Lt. James Sedalia Peters II
Ernest Virgil Plantz
Norman Warren VanCor

CLASS of 2006

Douglas A. Bora
Robert A. Janicki
Franklin E. Johnson, Sr.
William J. Johnston
Evans Edward Kerrigan
Peter Robert Pardo
Anthony Vito Savino
James S. Tierney
Carl Roderick Venditto
Edward Washburn Whitaker

CLASS of 2007

Michael J. Daly
Alfred Faticoni
Dr. George G. Gentile
Elwood A.D. Lechause
Anthony Mammola
Alfred A. Meadows
Robert J. Nearine
Col. Robert B. Nett
Tony Paul Pia
Darrell D. Stark

CLASS of 2008

Evans H. Daniels, Jr
Valentine David Galasyn
John L. Levitow
Howard Louis Luppi
Barbara Ellen Miller
H. Richard Newell, Jr.
William Atchinson O'Neill
Roger Gene Paulmeno
Frederick Gates Reincke
Robert Rudolph Ritz

CLASS of 2009

Richard O. Belden
John "Jack" Dougherty
Robert L. Genovese
Dr. Harvey James Grinsell, Jr.
Brig. Gen. John J. King
Rev. William David McGee
Brig. Gen. Daniel J. McHale
Theodore J. Plamondon, Jr.
Alphonse N. Sabetta
Daniel A. Vece, Jr.
Homer L. Wise

CLASS of 2010

Edmund J. Burke
Thomas J. Burke
John J. Carcioppolo
Robert C. Hunt, Jr.
Doris Troth Lippman
William J. McGurk
Robert C. Moeller
Abner Oakes III
Edward V. Sabotka
Robert R. Simmons
Stanley F. Zebzda

CLASS of 2011

Madelon Baranoski
Samuel K. Beamon, Sr.
George Kenneth Carpenter
Ronald Catania
John Gregory Chiarella
Harold B. Farrington, Jr.
Phillip R. Kraft
Ronald Perry
Richard Rampone
Burke Ross

CLASS of 2012

Father Thomas E. Berberich
Manuel Michael Cardoza, Jr.
Paul F. Dillon
Peter Galgano, Jr.
William George Godburn
Norman Hanenbaum
Alan Jepson
Charles Richard Morrissey, Sr.
Herbert Thomas Schacht
Thomas Sheridan
James H. Throwe
Carmine Joseph Vaccaro

CLASS OF 2013

John H. Bannan (posthumously)
George H. Breuler
John (Jack) G. Casey Jr.
Miguel A. Escalera, Sr.
Charles P. Gallagher
Robin L. Montgomery
James Milford Mosley
Michael Albert Thomas
William F. Vornkabl III
Robert John Young



CT VETERANS HALL OF FAME PAST INDUCTEES

CLASS OF 2014

Edwin Francis Atkins
Samuel Baez
Edmond Clark
Maurice L. Collin
Theodore Robert Cummings
Frank Esposito (posthumously)
David William Gay
Robert T. Getman
(posthumously)
Richard A. Herman
Gerald B. Wright

CLASS OF 2015

Glenn Arthur
Peter Beckwith
John DeBisschop
Elliott Donn
Richard Fuller
Thomas Heath
Allen Lawton
PW Louthain
Dan Riccio, Jr.
Michael Skelps
Greg Smith

CLASS OF 2016

Robert Burns
Bradford Davis
Francis Conahan
Archie Elam
Richard Iannucci
Paul Wm. Orstad
Linda S. Schwartz
Salvatore Sena
Kjell Tollefsen
Arthur Ward

CLASS OF 2017

Alfred Adinolfi
Robert Bailey
Philip Cacciola
Benjamin Cooper
Dominick Cortese
Lawrence Herrmann
Chester Morgan
Thomas Pandolfi
Thomas Quinn
William Sullivan
John Turk

CLASS OF 2018

Frank Alvarado
Kevin Brown "Red Eagle"
Daniel Camilliere
David P. Cole
Robert J. Froelick
Donald R. Maranell
William Charles Mason, Jr.
Lawrence Isiah Riley
Anthony J. Sileo

CLASS OF 2019

Robert T. Cahill, Sr.
Alfred H. Comeau
Richard King Gorman
Jesse Monroe Harrison
Lenell Kittlitz
Leonard Gene Lanza
Patrick R. Nelligan
Morton Melvin Pear
John A. Sarlo
John "Jack" Shea

CLASS OF 2020

Harvey Curtiss Barnum
Severio "Bob" Fodero
Theodore "Ted" Graziani
Edward Robert Karazin
Kristaps Juris Keggi
Michael "Mike" Kellett
Kenneth R. "K. Robert" Lewis
Stewart Brett McKinney
Mirca Reyes
Manuel Rodrigues
Heather Sandler
Thomas Eugene Williamson

CLASS OF 2021

Gerald Augustine
Paul Barry
John Bevins
Stanley Borusiewicz
Carlita Cotton
William Currlin
Brian Ohler
James Shelmerdine
Brendan Sniffin

CLASS OF 2022:

Edwin A. Gomes
Craig Jordan
Alvin Kinsall
Thaddeus Martin
Daniel W. Matthews
JamesPeter Matthews
David Paul McCaffrey
Regina Rush-Kittle
Thomas Francis Olson
John Edward Waggoner
Ronald E. Weil, Sr.
Michael Joseph Zacchea

CONNECTICUT VETERANS HALL OF FAME

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Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame

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For additional information regarding the
Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame, please contact:

**Office of the Commissioner
Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs
287 West Street, Rocky Hill, Connecticut 06067
(860) 616-3603**

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Grateful appreciation is extended to all those agencies, organizations and individuals who help support the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame throughout the year and who have made today's induction ceremony possible.



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