

# CONNECTICUT VETERANS HALL OF FAME



## CONNECTICUT VETERANS HALL OF FAME

### *History*

**Governor M. Jodi Rell created the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame by Executive Order in 2005 to recognize the post-military achievements of outstanding veterans and to spotlight the substantial contributions of veterans to communities across the state.** Governor Rell believed this was a critical time in state history to establish this honor and institution as more than 12,000 Connecticut citizens have performed military service in support of the Global War on Terrorism since September 11, 2001.

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 at least 10 inductees from applications received from across the state and nation. These veterans have been 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 all 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 and sponsored 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. To date, fifty-one distinguished veterans of Connecticut are honored in the Connecticut Veterans Hall of Fame.



# MEMBERS OF THE CONNECTICUT VETERANS HALL OF FAME (in alphabetical order)

## CLASS OF 2005

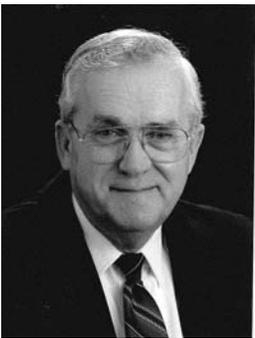
### **Nathan George Agostinelli (Manchester)**



His military service includes two years as a First Lieutenant in the United States Army during the Korean Conflict. He served six years in the U.S. Army Reserve and 23-years in the Connecticut National Guard advancing through the ranks from First Lieutenant to Brigadier General. He was elected Mayor of the Town of Manchester and then State Comptroller, becoming the first Manchester resident elected to statewide office. He has been an Executive Vice President of New England Bank, Trustee of Eastern Connecticut Health Network, Member of the State Banking Commission, and Member of the Connecticut Commission on Hospitals and Health Care; He was very instrumental in establishing the WWII Museum during the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Co-Chaired Manchester's Town Commemoration Committee. Currently, Mr. Agostinelli is a director of the Selective Service System for the State of Connecticut, appointed to that position by President Clinton.

## CLASS OF 2009

### **Richard O. Belden (posthumous award; formerly of Shelton)**



Dick Belden served in the U.S. Air Force from 1955 through 1961. Known as "The Dean of the House," Representative Belden served in the Connecticut General Assembly continuously from 1974 until his death in office in 2007. He held many key leadership positions in the Legislature including Assistant House Republican Leader, Deputy Speaker of the House, Ranking Member of the Finance Committee and Member of the state Bond Commission. He was Director of the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Connecticut Institute of Municipal Studies and held many other significant statewide posts. Mr. Belden had a 38-year management career at Sikorsky Aircraft. He was a trustee of St. Margaret Mary Church in Shelton and a volunteer at Griffin Hospital Parent Child Resource Center, Lower Naugatuck Valley Boys and Girls Club, Hewitt Memorial Hospital, Valley Substance Abuse Council, Emmett O'Brien Regional Vocational-Technical School and the American Legion Sutter-Terlizzi Post #16.

## CLASS OF 2006

### **Douglas A. Bora (Norwalk)**



Mr. Bora is a U.S. Army veteran of World War II and recipient of the Silver Star who continued his service with the Connecticut National Guard after the War. For many decades, he has been a tireless civic volunteer and leader through service as president of the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce, chairman of the Norwalk Bicentennial Commission responsible for coordinating 52 events, a Little League volunteer for 25 years and cofounder of the Norwalk Community Theater.



**CLASS OF 2005**  
**President George Herbert Walker Bush (Greenwich)**

He served as a Naval Aviator during World War II and flew 58 combat missions. He was the youngest pilot in the Navy when he received his wings. He was elected to Congress in 1967 from the State of Texas and continued to serve his country as Ambassador to the United Nations and Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. In 1980, he was elected Vice-President under Ronald Reagan and was elected the 41<sup>st</sup> President of the United States in 1988.



**CLASS OF 2005**  
**William Thomas Coffey, Sr. (Plainville)**

Colonel Coffey has an outstanding 43-year military career in the Connecticut National Guard. His unit was mobilized for the Korean Conflict and he volunteered for duty in Vietnam. After his military service, he continued serving his comrades and fellow veterans. For the past 8 years, he has been active with the Connecticut Committee for the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves and currently serves as Vice-Chairman of that group. He is active in the important Pre and Post Mobilization Process for members of the Connecticut National Guard and Reserve units being mobilized for duty in Southwest Asia.

In collaboration with this son, Major William Coffey Jr. has published two anthologies of American Patriotism. He has been an avid collector of the stories and “uncommon words from common patriots” that comprise the volumes of “Patriots Heart” and “More Patriots Heart” which are rich with text that reflect and celebrate the American spirit, honor, integrity and wisdom.



**CLASS OF 2005**  
**Dr. Randall Howard Collins (Waterford)**

Dr. Collins served in the United States Army Military Intelligence Division during the Vietnam War. He received several medals and commendations during his tour of duty in that conflict. Returning to civilian life, he sought a career in education and in 1987 received his doctorate from Boston University. A Superintendent of Schools in three different communities the majority of which has been in Waterford. He pioneered the “Learning Through Service Program,” making Waterford the first public school in America to require community service hours as a requirement for graduation, promoting good citizenship. He has received the

Connecticut Superintendent of the Year Award. One of his most important contributions to the veteran community was his leadership in urging the Board of Education to award high school diplomas to WWII veterans whose education was interrupted because of the war. This was adopted throughout Connecticut. He also was effective in persuading the Board to adopt a policy of offering maximum financial support to all employees in the Reserves that are called to Active Duty and encouraged other school districts to do the same. As a member of the Military/Superintendents Liaison Commission, he examines various needs of the military community living in Southeast Connecticut. He continues to be a strong advocate for veterans and military personnel.



**CLASS OF 2007**  
**Michael J. Daly (Fairfield)**

*United States Army* WORLD WAR II SERVICE *Congressional Medal of Honor* for heroism on April 18, 1945, Nuremberg, Germany. • Three Silver Stars for Gallantry in Action • Bronze Star and two awards of the Purple Heart Medal for wounds received in action • Battlefield Commission in France, from Private First Class to Second Lieutenant, December 1944 • Legion of Valor Life Member • Man of the Year, Town of Fairfield, 1946 • U.S. Military Academy at West Point lecturer, whose military record is used as an outstanding example of the duties of an Army Infantry Officer in time of war • Life Member Kiwanis Club • Board of Directors, St. Vincent's Hospital 1980– 2000 • Member of

Connecticut Judicial Review Council, ten years service • Founder and CEO of the Daly Foundation • Over 30 years service to children with handicaps and their hospitals • Over 50 years of service to the Town of Fairfield.



**CLASS OF 2008**  
**Dr. Evans H. Daniels, Jr., MD,**  
**posthumous award (formerly of Wethersfield)**

Dr. Daniels, formerly of Wethersfield, was drafted as a U.S. Army medic out of medical school for World War II and went on to receive two Bronze Stars. Following the war, he completed medical school and returned to Hartford to establish a family medical practice and the first medical clinic in the state dedicated to serving the poor, now known as Community Health Services. Dr. Daniels also served as the physician for the State Veterans Home in Rocky Hill and performed extensive medical missionary work in Guyana, China, Africa, Honduras and Santo Domingo focusing on bringing modern medical services to the poor.



**CLASS OF 2009**  
**John "Jack" Joseph Dougherty (Branford)**

John "Jack" Dougherty enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1966. In Vietnam, he served as an infantryman and squad leader with the 3/4 Marine Division and participated in Operation Robin South Hill 685 (Phou Noui), where he was wounded and awarded the Purple Heart Medal. A volunteer since 1982 with the Boy Scouts of America, he is also an active member of the Disabled American Veterans and the Military Order of the Devil Dogs. He serves as finance officer of the Military Order of the Purple Heart and has been a devoted member and officer of the Marine Corps League, serving as Detachment Adjutant and Senior Vice Commander. The Marine Corps League named him the Connecticut Detachment "Marine of the Year 2008."

Mr. Dougherty has also received the New England Division Roland G. Knapp Award in 2008, the Marine Corps League Distinguished Bronze Service Medal and the Distinguished Silver Citizen Medal.



**CLASS OF 2005**  
**Bruce Hults Ey**  
**(Wethersfield) (Posthumously)**

Mr. Ey attained the rank of Technical Sergeant in the United States Army Air Force during World War II. Although stricken with polio as a young man he enthusiastically sought to serve in the military. During his time in service he was a Radio Gunner on a B-17, did combat tours in Korea and Vietnam, was a Prisoner of War and received numerous medals and commendations including the Purple Heart. He served as the Commanding Officer for the Military Intelligence and Security Unit FRF Germany. He retired with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He continued to serve his former comrades after being appointed Director of Veteran's Home Life at the State Veterans Home and Hospital in 1973. In his desire to help his fellow veterans he spearheaded efforts to engage community support to improve the quality of life for the veterans at Rocky Hill. He was responsible for establishing the Home's Outreach Program and instituting many recreational activities that enriched the lives of the veterans at the Home then and for years to come. He shared his love of sports by coaching Little League in Wethersfield. He also ensured that veterans were honored twice a year by Major League Baseball at Shea Stadium, Yankee Stadium or Fenway Park.

**[Accepting was Ms. Ey, Widow]**



**CLASS OF 2007**  
**Alfred J. Faticoni (Newington) (Posthumously)**

United States Navy and United States Army 1947—1950 Enlisted one year in US Navy and then enlisted in the US Army for two years • 2006 George H. Seal Award: National DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Volunteer of the Year • Cofounder of DAV hospital transportation program for Newington VA Hospital • 2002 Connecticut Federal Executive Association Award for Outstanding Federal Volunteer • Disabled American Veterans Department of Connecticut Volunteer of the Year Award 1993 • Recognized for Outstanding Support of the VA CT Healthcare System 1994-95 and Recipient of the VA Center Directors' "Badge of Pride" Award • City of New Britain Distinguished Service Award 1977 • Chairman and Fund raiser for Commemorative Wall Project, Newington VA Campus • Department of Connecticut Italian American War Veteran Man of the Year 1973 • Over 60,500 hours and over 45 years of volunteer service to veterans. **[Accepting was Barry Faticoni, Nephew]**



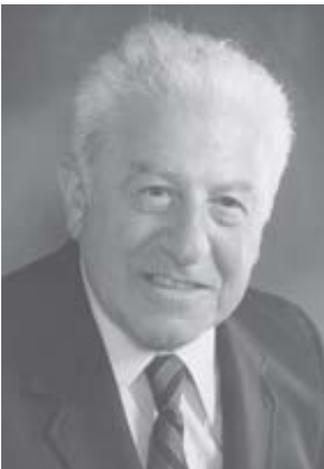
**CLASS OF 2008**  
**Dr. Valentine D. Galasyn, PhD, MD, of Canterbury**

Dr. Galasyn, of Canterbury, served for 25 years in the U.S. Navy with wartime service during World War II, Korea and Vietnam. Earning a doctorate in chemistry and his MD later in life, he served as a Naval physician off the coast of Vietnam and as director of the Naval Undersea Medical Institute in Groton. With four other Navy physicians, Dr. Galasyn voluntarily established and manned the first emergency department at Windham Hospital. Following his retirement from the military, he served the community for many years as a community physician, donating many in-kind services and for over 40 years was an active volunteer with the 4H.



**CLASS OF 2009**  
**Robert L. Genovese of Naugatuck**

Robert Genovese served in Vietnam in the U.S. Air Force. He is co-founder of the “Veterans Who Care Committee,” which for over 20 years raised funds for children of Vietnam veterans born with birth defects due to the effects of exposure to Agent Orange. The organization also offered emergency financial assistance to veterans in need while awaiting permanent benefits. He is past commander of VFW Post #1946; past commander, Union City Chapter #11 Disabled American Veterans; and organizer of POW/MIA remembrance vigils in Naugatuck. He was Honorary Grand Marshall of the 2008 Connecticut Veterans Day Parade. As a consultant on the Connecticut production of the movie “Jackknife” starring Robert DeNiro and Ed Harris, Mr. Genovese was instrumental in assuring that returning Vietnam veterans were portrayed accurately. A former accredited veterans service officer/counselor with the Connecticut Department of Veterans’ Affairs, he also serves on the Board of Directors of the Vietnam Veterans Agent Orange Victims, Inc., and is a member of AMVETS, Catholic War Veterans Post #708, American Legion Post #17, Italian-American War Veterans Post #8 and Veterans of the Vietnam War. A long-time member of the Naugatuck Elks Lodge #967, he was named Volunteer of the Year 1998-99 and is a member of the Elks National Service Commission. He also is a member of the Knights of Columbus Ojeda Council #33 and St. Hedwig Roman Catholic Church.



**CLASS OF 2007**  
**Dr. George G. Gentile (Newington) (Posthumously)**

WORLD WAR II SERVICE 2nd Lieutenant, US Marine Corps, Battle for Iwo Jima Founder and President of The Iwo Jima Survivors Association. Formed Iwo Jima Memorial Survivor’s Association, Inc. • Author of book *History of the Iwo Jima Survivors Association, Inc. and the National Iwo Jima Monument* • Doctor of Dental Surgery, Treasurer CT State Dental Society. Member of Fellow-Pierre Fauchard Academy of Dentistry. NE Regional Board of Examiners. Fones Humanitarian Award, CT State Dental Association. • President and Charter Member of New Britain Civitan Club • CT General Assembly Citation for establishing National Iwo Jima Monument in New Britain, CT • State of Hawaii House of Representatives recognition for assistance with the Pacific War Memorial • Letter of Commendation from General M. W. Hagee, Commandant of the US Marine Corps

**[Accepting was Mrs. Winn Gentile, Widow]**





**CLASS OF 2009**  
**Dr. Harvey J. Grinsell, Jr., MD,**  
**of Putnam/Woodstock**

Prior to completing high school in 1945, Dr. Harvey Grinsell enlisted in the Navy during World War II as a pharmacist's mate. He was called back into the Navy as a lieutenant upon completion of his medical degree from Tufts Medical School in 1954. He served as a medical officer for the Arctic Fleet through 1956. He co-developed an antidote for hydrocarbon (lead) poisoning and conducted research on methods to diagnose spinal meningitis. He was founder and director of the Day Kimball Pediatric Center, the first known hospital-based program of its kind in the nation. He served as medical director of the John Dempsey Regional Center, where he co-developed one of the state's first early intervention programs for infants with developmental disabilities. He established in-school medical exams, immunizations and screening for children in rural eastern Connecticut towns. He brought the federal Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program to rural eastern Connecticut to improve maternal and childhood nutrition. The Quinnebaug Valley Association for Retarded Citizens named Dr. Grinsell "Man of the Year" and the Danielson Junior Chamber of Commerce gave him their "Distinguished Service Award." Dr. Grinsell was honored by the Town of Plainfield for establishing the Plainfield Day Kimball Pediatric Center at Plainfield Town Hall.



**CLASS OF 2006**  
**Robert A. Janicki (Guilford)**

Mr. Janicki is a U.S. Marine veteran of the Vietnam War and has been an active advocate for veterans for over 25 years, serving as the founder/chairperson of the SNET/AT&T Veterans, a veterans support group that has raised funding and awareness for veterans needs across the state and nation. He is an active member of several veterans' advisory boards and service organizations.



**CLASS OF 2006**  
**Franklin E. Johnson, Sr., (Naugatuck)**

Mr. Johnson is a U.S. Army veteran of World War II who served a 38-year career as an educator, counselor and coach at Naugatuck High School and has led the Naugatuck Veterans Council as chairman for two decades, developing Naugatuck's extensive Memorial Day parade into one of the largest patriotic parades in New England.



### **CLASS OF 2006**

#### **William J. Johnston (Colchester) (Posthumously)**

Mr. Johnston, of Colchester, served with the U.S. Army in World War II and was awarded the **Congressional Medal of Honor** in February 1944 while serving with the 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Italy. He continued his service to fellow veterans through a long career with the U.S. Veterans Administration and through service on the Colchester Board of Selectmen, the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs Board of Commissioners and as state commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

**[Accepting is his daughter Mrs. Dorothy O'Meara]**



### **CLASS OF 2006**

#### **Evans Edward Kerrigan (Rocky Hill)**

Mr. Kerrigan is a U.S. Marine veteran of the Korean War and was awarded three Purple Hearts for wounds received during enemy action. He has been extensively involved in veterans' advocacy at the state and national levels including leadership positions with the Military Order of the Purple Heart and the E-2-5 Korea Association and is a published author of several books on military history and medals.



### **CLASS OF 2009**

#### **Brig Gen. John J. King (posthumous award;formerly of Hartford)**

Brig. Gen. John King began his career in the U.S. Army as a captain in the infantry from 1942 to 1946. He saw combat in Italy, where he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism in action October 1944 at Camp diVenino, Italy. A recipient of the Silver Star, the Purple Heart and the Italian Military Valor Cross, he rose to Assistant Division Commander with the 76<sup>th</sup> Division, U.S. Army Reserves. General King became a civil engineer with management responsibility for the construction and renovation of several landmark buildings, including St. Joseph's Cathedral and the Phoenix Insurance

"Boat" Building. He was Corporate Vice President of the George A. Fuller Co. and Horn Construction, Inc., of Hartford. He was one of the main organizers of the Connecticut Armed Forces Day Parades from 1970 to 1984. General King also served as President Emeritus of the Board of Trustees of St. Joseph's College. A co-founder and past president, he established the 100 Club of Connecticut, dedicated to the financial support of spouses and children of first responders killed in the line of duty. He was a incorporator of St. Francis Hospital and a member of the National and Connecticut Society of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. He served as a member of the Connecticut Department of Public Works Advisory Council and of the Retired Military Officers Association.



**CLASS OF 2007**  
**Elwood A.D. "Woody" Lechause (Enfield)**

VIETNAM WAR, Sergeant, US Army, Airborne • Life Member of eight veterans organizations, 35 years of veterans advocacy • Travelers Life Insurance Co. (retired) • CT Department of Veterans' Affairs Board of Trustees • Charter member, CT War Veterans Memorial Register of Remembrance Commission • Member, Nomination Review Board for Military Academies for US Senate and US House of Representatives • Secretary and Treasurer of Connecticut Veterans' Coalition Forum • Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 120 • Charter Member, Community Advisory Committee for VA CT • Co-Chair Mental Health Community Advisory Board for VA CT • Chairman, Manchester, CT Veterans Council on Homeless Veterans • 82nd Airborne Division Association, Inc, Veterans' Service Officer • CT Yankee All-Airborne Chapter (CYAAC) Board of Directors • National Executive Committee, Disabled American Veterans • Department of Connecticut Commander, Adjutant and Legislative Chair, DAV • Frequent testifier on veterans' issues before US Senate, US Department of Veterans' Administration, CT State Legislature • Author of many publications on veterans and disabled veterans issues.



**CLASS OF 2008**  
**John L. Levitow,**  
**posthumous award (formerly of Glastonbury)**

Mr. Levitow, formerly of Glastonbury, was the first and lowest ranking member of the U.S. Air Force ever to receive the *Congressional Medal of Honor* for his heroism in saving his aircraft and crew over Long Binh, Vietnam in February 1969. After his discharge, Mr. Levitow became a tireless advocate for Air Force enlisted men and veterans, traveling around the world to speak with service members. He worked on behalf of veterans for many years in key positions including service as a VA Congressional liaison, benefits counselor, and chief of medical administration at the Newington VA Medical Center and as the director of planning and assistant to the commissioner at the Connecticut Department of Veterans' Affairs.



**CLASS OF 2005**  
**Joseph G. Lombardo (Middlefield)**

Mr. Lombardo served as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant during World War II as a Navigator in the Army Air Force. He was elected to the Connecticut General Assembly in 1956 and served on the House Veterans and Military Affairs Committee. He strongly advocated for veterans and organized the Middlefield American Legion Post #92 and was its first Commander. He is a life member of the American Legion and VFW. His life of philanthropy and community leadership touched countless individuals. As a member of the Connecticut Board of Football Officials, he served for 15 years as a Head Linesman. He was cited by Citizen's Bank and Farmer's Mechanics Bank for 20 years of outstanding contributions to the banking community. A member of the Board of Trustees of Middlesex Community College for 10 years, he established an endowment fund to finance the tuition program for needy students. Included among his many philanthropic activities is his work with the Middlesex County Foundation, assistance to troubled children at the Cromwell Children's Home where he organized and secured funds that enabled them to build a new education building and as Treasurer of the Levi Coe Library.



**CLASS OF 2008**  
**Howard L. Luppi of North Haven**

Mr. Luppi, of North Haven, served in World War II and received a Bronze Star and Purple Heart for his service during the Battle of the Bulge. While establishing and growing his own CPA firm, he began a long public service career culminating as a member of the Connecticut House of Representatives from the 88<sup>th</sup> District from 1980 to 1990. Locally, Mr. Luppi served as second selectman, assistant town treasurer and as a member of the Finance Board. He is the co-founder of the Connecticut Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge and served as vice commander of American Legion Post #76, coordinating many veterans recognition and educational programs.



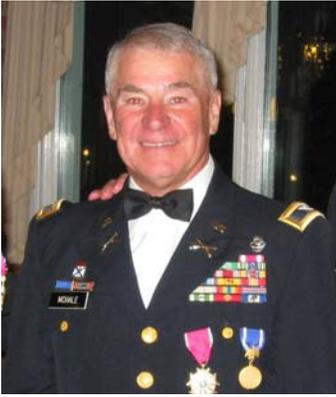
**CLASS OF 2007**  
**Anthony Mammola (Westbrook)**

WORLD WAR II Service US Navy, Chief Naval Aviation Pilot • Purple Heart for wounds received after being shot down over Luzon, Philippines • Lt. Commander, US Naval Reserve • Design Engineer at Electric Boat, Groton • 42 years of local veterans advocacy • Representative of the Soldiers’ Sailors’ and Marines’ Fund of Connecticut Submarine Group II recognition Award • Special Olympics volunteer and recipient, Special Olympics “Medal of Honor” • Veterans’ benefits service officer for local American Legion, VFW, and Elks • “Veteran’s Veteran” of Westbrook Elks Club, author of Veterans’ column. • Volunteer with West Haven Veterans Hospital, American Legion, VFW and Disabled American Veterans. • Chairman of Old Saybrook Memorial Day Parade since 1969.



**CLASS OF 2009**  
**Rev. William D. McGee of Winsted**

The Rev. William McGee served as a corporal in the U.S. Marine Corps in the First Marine Air Wing in Vietnam. He was awarded the Purple Heart Medal (2 awards) and the Meritorious Unit Citation Vietnam Cross of Gallantry. Ordained with the Southern Baptist Convention and Fellowship of Connecticut Congregational Christian Churches, he has a 30-year career in the ministry, founding and serving many churches, organizations and missions throughout the United States. Rev. McGee was awarded the Presidential Volunteer Service Award for over 5,000 hours of volunteer service. He has also received national recognition from the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches for his work with youth. He is a former prison chaplain and currently serves as the chaplain of VFW Post #296 and as a volunteer chaplain for the Connecticut Chapter for the Missing in America Project. Rev. McGee founded and is pastoral leader for Men Walking With God International Ministries. He serves as a member of the Boards of Directors for Asian Faith Mission and for Agape Childrens’ Home, both located in Kerala, India.



## **CLASS OF 2009**

### **Brig. Gen. Daniel J. McHale of Avon**

Brig. Gen. Daniel McHale began his military career as an enlisted Army diver in Vietnam. Retiring with over 35 years of military service, he rose to the rank of Brigadier General, Infantry, Connecticut Army National Guard. General McHale was Commander of the Connecticut National Guard's Quick Reaction Force following the events of September 11, 2001, and coordinator of the state's Katrina Relief Operations in 2005 and 2006. He is the recipient of the Legion of Merit, Vietnam Service Medal and currently serves as the Connecticut Department of Defense

Transitional Assistance Advisor, providing outreach, advocacy and benefits assistance to all generations of veterans and active duty personnel and their families. He is Co-Chairman of the Connecticut OEF/OIF Support Coordination Committee and a contributor to the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force. He is a facilitator for the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program for returning Reserve and National Guard units. He volunteers as a guardian for the "American Warrior" Honor Flight Program, which takes World War II veterans to Washington, D.C., to view the national WWII Memorial. The 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of the Connecticut Chapter of the Association of the U.S. Army, General McHale also volunteers with the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) and "Give2the Troops" overseas care package program. He is a retired senior manager of the U.S. Postal Service and former Postmaster of Simsbury, Connecticut.



## **CLASS OF 2007**

### **Alfred A. Meadows (Huntington)**

VIETNAM WAR SERVICE US Army, 1965-1968 Combat Infantryman • Purple Heart, Vietnam • Past State Commander for Disabled American Veterans, State Vice Commander for CT Military Order of the Purple Heart, Post Commander of VFW and American Legion units • VFW State Honor Guard and Drill Team • Founder of "Operation Gift Card" , raising more than \$65,000 in gift certificates presented to wounded troops on personal visits to Walter Reed and Bethesda Hospitals. Expanded program to collect items for Family Assistance Program and Fisher House for

families of wounded • Chairman "Operation Dust-Off" providing day trips to hospitalized veterans • Owner of AL Meadows Graphic Design, LLC which provides pro bono design for veterans' organizations • "Volunteer of the Year" CT DAV • Local volunteer Cub Scouts, Special Olympics, YMCA, Fairfield County Firefighters.





**CLASS OF 2008**  
**Barbara E. Miller, RN, of Gales Ferry**

Ms. Miller, of Gales Ferry, had a 20-year active duty career as a Navy nurse with service during the Vietnam War, retiring at the rank of Commander. An educator for over 26 years, she has provided medical instruction, training and volunteer services for multiple organizations including the Department of Developmental Disabilities, Connecticut League for Nursing, the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association and the American Cancer Society. Her veterans advocacy work has included service as president of the WAVES Unit #40, president of the state chapter of the Military Officers Association of America and director of the Retired Activities Office, Submarine Base New London.



**CLASS OF 2005**  
**Giacomo "Jack" Mordente II (Branford)**

Mr. Mordente served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam era and was on active duty for three years. Upon discharge, he joined the Army Reserve to continue serving his country. For the past 30 years, Jack has served the needs of veterans as Director of Veterans Affairs at Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven. As an Adjunct Faculty member, he initiated the Vietnam War Era Historical, Cultural, Social and Geopolitical Study Program. He has sponsored PTSD In-Service Training at the Connecticut Department of Corrections. He has energetically encouraged veterans' awareness at SCSU by sponsoring the Smithsonian Vietnam War Photo Exhibit and Connecticut Vietnam Veterans Art Shows. He is a dauntless advocate for veterans and has spoken and lectured about America and the Vietnam Experience, women veterans, minority veterans and Gulf War veterans. He was a member of the New Haven Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee, Connecticut Board of Higher Education Advisory Committee and Chair of the Connecticut Herbicides Information Commission. He is an active member of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. He has also advocated for veterans on the national level on such issues as healthcare, education and employment.



**CLASS OF 2007**  
**Robert J. Nearine (Glastonbury)**

KOREAN WAR ERA Colonel, US Army Reserve, retired • Public schools educator, counselor, administrator, 41 years • Adjunct Faculty, US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS • National Publications Committee, Reserve Officers Association • National Defense Education Forum Chairman. Commended for "exceptional contributions" to program for National Security Seminar planning handbook. CT Medical Reserve Corps Planning Committee • Volunteer with CREPC Medical Reserve Corps. • Captain, First Company, Governor's Foot Guard. Coordinator, *Battalion Review*, quarterly newsletter • National Councilman, Reserve Officers Association. • Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve • President Phi Delta Kappa, UConn Chapter and Area coordinator, New England and Eastern Canada • Masonic 32nd Level, Shrine, Knight Templar, Royal Order of Jesters, Sphinx Temple, Newington • Life Member, AMVETS • Post Commander, American Legion Post 1771 • Member, American Psychological Association • Member, Pi Lambda Theta (International Honor Society and Professional Association in Education) • Past President, Hartford Civitan Club.



## **CLASS OF 2007**

### **Robert B. Nett (New Haven and Columbus, GA)**

WORLD WAR II, KOREAN WAR, AND VIETNAM WAR Service  
*Congressional Medal of Honor*, for remarkable courage in combat near  
Cognon, Leyte, Philippine Islands, Dec. 14, 1944. • Commanded Officer  
Candidate School, Ft. Benning, known as “The Father of the Officer  
Candidate School.” • 33 years military service, retiring as Colonel  
in 1973 • Honorary “Colonel of the Regiment” 102nd Infantry, CT Army

National Guard • Long-time public school educator • “Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award”  
Columbus, GA Schools system • Featured in Tom Brokaw’s book, *The Greatest Generation* •  
Received “The 2007 Spirit of Hope Award” USO’s highest honor. • Advocate for veterans’ services  
and benefit claims through his work with the VA VFW, American Legion and Vietnam Veterans’  
groups • Developed and provided series of leadership seminars to OCS candidates.

**[Accepting was BG Retired Daniel J. McHale, former 102d Infantry Commander]**

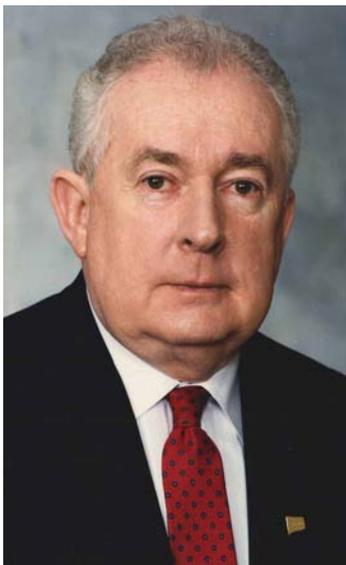


## **CLASS OF 2008**

### **H. Richard Newell, Jr., of Hartford**

Mr. Newell, of Hartford, was a lance corporal in the U.S. Marine Corps in  
Vietnam with service during the Tet Offensive and is a recipient of the  
Purple Heart. He serves as the Disabled American Veterans’ (DAV)  
hospital service coordinator at the Newington VA Medical Center where he  
coordinates and provides multiple services to disabled veterans, including  
the DAV transportation program. As a DAV volunteer driver, he has  
driven 101,299 miles in 6,448 hours to transport 2,835 veterans for medical

care. A former trustee of the Connecticut Department of Veterans’ Affairs, he has served as state  
commander of both the DAV and the Italian-American War Veterans and district commander of the  
VFW.



## **CLASS OF 2008**

### **Governor William A. O’Neill, posthumous award (formerly of East Hampton)**

Governor O’Neill, formerly of East Hampton, served as a U.S. Air Force  
B-29 gunner flying twelve night combat missions over North Korea  
during the Korean War. The 84<sup>th</sup> Governor of Connecticut and longest  
serving in over 200 years, Governor O’Neill is credited with increasing  
state funding for education, re-building the state’s infrastructure and  
providing additional resources and programs for many less fortunate  
citizens. He also established a new state veteran’s cemetery in  
Middletown. Prior to becoming Governor, Mr. O’Neill had extensive  
public service as a member of the East Hampton Finance Board, as a  
member of the Connecticut House of Representatives rising to the  
position of majority leader and as Lt. Governor.



**CLASS OF 2006**  
**Peter Robert Pardo (Madison)**

Mr. Pardo served with the U.S. Army during World War II as a noncommissioned officer and then earned an officer commission with the U.S. Air Force where he served on active duty for another 26 years. After completing law school later in life, he has served as an elected official in Madison for over 24 years and volunteered extensively with local civic organizations.



**CLASS OF 2008**  
**Roger G. Paulmeno of Old Greenwich**

Mr. Paulmeno, of Old Greenwich, was a helicopter door-gunner during the Vietnam War where he was seriously wounded while handling a burning grenade inside his aircraft in order to save his crew. He was cited for valor and is a recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross. For the last 23 years he has devoted his career to helping veterans as a VA readjustment counseling therapist and is currently Team Leader/Chief for the White Plains, NY Vets Center. For many years he has volunteered locally assisting individual veterans with benefits information, participating in memorial events, and instructing students about the Vietnam War.



**CLASS OF 2005**  
**Lt. James Sedalia Peters II (Storrs)**

Dr. Peters served in the United States Navy during World War II. In spite of being in a segregated camp at Great Lakes, his work and research helped to bring about integration in the United States Navy in 1945. The other military services did not integrate until 1948. Dr. Peters, a retired administrator, professor and licensed clinical/counseling psychologist, served as Associate Commissioner for the Connecticut Department of Education. His assistance to veterans includes 10 years working for the U.S Veterans Administration. Throughout his life, he has been a champion for the rights of physically, mentally disadvantaged and handicapped individuals. He has written numerous publications, including 25 books on a range of topics and interest areas. His works include: "Psychological Consequences of Being a Black American": a sourcebook of research by Black Psychologists; "Leadership and Career Development"; "The Saga of Black Navy Veterans of WWII: An American Triumph"; and "Social Justice for the Disabled.



**CLASS OF 2007**  
**Tony Paul Pia (Stamford) (Posthumously)**

**WORLD WAR II, KOREAN WAR, AND VIETNAM WAR SERVICE** Sergeant First Class, United States Army • Intelligence sergeant, drill instructor, NATO interpreter and recruiting sergeant • Assistant Director of the Human Rights Commission of City of Stamford, CT • Board of Directors, Stamford Municipal Credit Union • Host of “Old Sarge Tony Pia” weekly radio program on WSTC-AM • Veterans Advocate, 40 years • General Chairman of Stamford Veteran’s Memorial and Park Committee.

Worked tirelessly to reconstruct Veterans Memorial Park in Stamford • Host of “Voice of Democracy” contest for High School students. This work was honored by the establishment of a \$5000 annual “The “Old Sarge Tony Pia Scholarship” awarded to a Stamford High School student • Stamford Jaycee’s Distinguished Award for Outstanding Community Service • “Man of the Year” by American-Italian Association 1978 • “Citizen of the Year” by Jewish War Veterans of Stamford • Honored by the Marine Corps and Army for work with veterans.

**[Accepting was Barbara Pia-Malizia, Daughter]**



**CLASS OF 2009**  
**Theodore J. Plamondon, Jr. of Enfield**

Theodore “Ted” Plamondon’s 21-year enlisted military career spanned three decades with service in the U.S. Navy during World War II and with the Naval Reserves during the Korea and Vietnam War eras. He is a recipient of the Presidential Unit Citation, WWII Victory Medal and European Theater Ribbon with two stars. His volunteer service as a highly-involved local veteran includes 20 years as Chairman of the Enfield Veterans Council and service as a lifetime member. He organized and raised funds for Enfield’s Memorial Day and Veterans Day parades for

over 50 years. He is Chairman of the Enfield World War II Monument Committee, Treasurer and Co-Chairman of the National Purple Heart Museum and spearheaded the dedication of a new monument honoring all fallen Enfield citizens from WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam. He is a 20-year service officer and Chairman of multiple committees at his VFW Post #1501. In 1996, he received the Enfield Town Council “Patriot Award” and 2006 they named him a “Citizen of the Year.” Mr. Plamondon is a retired police officer for the towns of Suffield and Enfield, a former deputy sheriff for Hartford County and a state marshal.





**CLASS OF 2005**  
**Lt. Ernest Virgil Plantz (Gales Ferry)**

Mr. Plantz served with the United States Navy in World War II and attained the rank of Lieutenant. In 1942 he survived the sinking of his submarine, the USS Perch, by Japanese forces and became a prisoner of war. He was liberated more than 3 years later in 1945. He was awarded several medals included the Purple Heart and Bronze Star. He overcame physical and emotional damages he suffered as a Prisoner of War to serve his community and fellow veterans. Although he is a disabled veteran his untiring energy and commitment to others is impressive. He is active in civic affairs in Ledyard, especially the Lions Club where he served as President. His effort to enrich the lives of others was recognized by his honor as the Melvin Jones Fellow, which is the highest award for humanitarian service bestowed by Lions International. He also served as a member of the Southeastern Connecticut Regional Planning Agency, as Deacon in his church and is a member of many patriotic and fraternal organizations. He has also spent many hours teaching school children about the history of World War II and the sacrifices made by our veterans.



**CLASS OF 2008**  
**Lt. Gen. Frederick G. Reincke, posthumous award**  
**(formerly of Wethersfield and Rocky Hill)**

Lt. Gen. Reincke, formerly of Wethersfield and Rocky Hill, served for 47 years in uniform in two World Wars as both a Navy sailor and as an Army/Connecticut National Guard officer. He is the longest-serving Adjutant General of the State Military Department, serving under six governors from 1948 to 1963. While Adjutant General and following his retirement from the military, General Reincke also served as warden of the Connecticut State Prison, responsible for restoring order after a series of riots and initiating several rehabilitative programs. His extensive public service also includes serving as Hartford County High Sheriff and as a member of the Wethersfield Board of Selectmen and Police Commission.



**CLASS OF 2008**  
**Robert R. Ritz of Stamford**

Mr. Ritz, of Stamford, was an enlisted Army combat engineer in Vietnam with service during the Tet Offensive. For over 35 years, he has volunteered at the West Haven VA Medical Center visiting patients weekly and organizing supportive events. A 38-year member of the Elks, he has served as exalted ruler, trustee and veterans affairs chairman for Lodge #899 in Stamford. Mr. Ritz is also an elder, youth ministry chairman and Sunday school teacher at Zion Lutheran Church and is a life member of the VFW with active service on the drill team/honor guard. He has coordinated volunteer fundraising for the West Haven VA, Connecticut Children's Medical Center, Special Olympics and New York City homeless missions.



**CLASS OF 2009**  
**Alphonse N. Sabetta of Shelton**

Alphonse Sabetta served as a U.S. Army staff sergeant during the Korean War, where he was awarded the Korean Service Medal with Two Bronze Stars and the United Nations Service Medal. He is past Commander and the current Adjutant of the Sutter-Terlizi American Legion Post #16. In 2008 he was inducted in the Connecticut American Legion Hall of Fame. Mr. Sabetta is the organizer of many annual activities for youth to raise awareness of veterans' contributions and community service including oratorical contests, fundraisers and Americanism programs in the schools. He chaired the Naugatuck Valley Area Veterans Korean War 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration from 2000 to 2003. He is a member of the local selection committee for Boys and Girls State and serves as Chairman of the War Memorial Scholarship Committee of Shelton. He also is a member of the VFW and Korean War Veterans Associations. A long-time organizer, coach and official for youth athletics, his devotion to young people includes service with the Bob Cousy Basketball League, Little League, New Haven Board #10 Basketball Officials, Western Connecticut Football Officials, and Valley and New Haven Umpires Association. Mr. Sabetta is a retired maintenance supervisor for the Shelton Board of Education at Shelton High School.



**CLASS OF 2006**  
**Anthony Vito Savino (Bristol)**

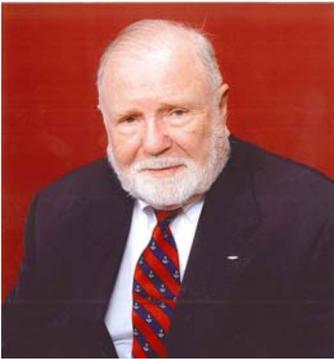
Mr. Savino served on active duty with the U.S. Army and Connecticut Army National Guard for 40 years, serving as the state command sergeant major of the Connecticut National Guard for his last 16 years. During his military service and since his retirement, he has volunteered tirelessly in his community on numerous boards, commissions, and veterans committees, including service on the Bristol City Council.





**CLASS OF 2007**  
**Darrell D. Stark (Stafford)**

WORLD WAR II SERVICE, PRISONER OF WAR, JAPAN Corporal, US Army  
• Taken Prisoner of War Yokkaichi, Japan 1942-1945 • Purple Heart Medal for wounds received in Bataan 1942 • Philippine Liberation Medal, Bronze Star for Meritorious Achievement in ground combat World War II • 20-year public service career as corrections officer/warden, Department of Corrections • Certificate of Achievement in Supervisory Training of Jail Officers • Developed Inmate Transportation Program for Connecticut Department of Corrections • Volunteer counselor/mentor to former inmates, assisting with reintegration • “Teacher in Residence” at National Prisoner of War Museum, Americus, GA • Advisor to medical personnel at Veterans’ Administration on behalf of veteran and ex-prisoners of war for 20 years. • Stafford area Community volunteer, including as frequent historical lecturer to school children. Service US Navy, Chief Naval Aviation Pilot • Purple Heart for wounds received after being shot down over Luzon, Philippines • Lt. Commander, US Naval Reserve • Design Engineer at Electric Boat, Groton • 42 years of local veterans advocacy • Representative of the Soldiers’ Sailors’ and Marines’ Fund of Connecticut • Submarine Group II recognition Award • Special Olympics volunteer and recipient, Special Olympics “Medal of Honor” • Veterans’ benefits service officer for local American Legion, VFW, and Elks • “Veteran’s Veteran” of Westbrook Elks Club, author of Veterans’ column. Volunteer with West Haven Veterans Hospital, American Legion, VFW and Disabled American Veterans. Chairman of Old Saybrook Memorial Day Parade since 1969.



**CLASS OF 2006**  
**James S. Tierney (West Hartford)**

Mr. Tierney is a career U.S. Navy veteran of World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, serving as both a sailor and Naval officer. He has advocated for veterans issues before the General Assembly, as a founding member of the Connecticut Veterans Coalition Forum, and has provided significant leadership to many veterans’ organizations, including service as chairman of the new West Hartford Veterans Memorial.



**CLASS OF 2005**  
**Norman Warren VanCor (Harwinton)**

Served in the United States Marines during the Vietnam War where he attained the rank of Sergeant. He was awarded the Navy Cross for his heroic actions in saving the lives of two of his wounded comrades during a firefight in Vietnam in 1969. He has been active in advocating for veterans and has volunteered his time in serving on community and state boards and commissions. He is a master gardener and taught gardening to the inmates at the Cheshire Correctional Institute to help them with transitional employment upon their release. He was an original Corporator of Bradley Memorial Hospital in Southington. Other notable accomplishments include service as President of the Southington Water Commission, Alternate Member of the Connecticut Judicial Review Council and member of the Council on Environmental Quality. He was inducted into the American Diabetes Hall of Merit and selected as one of the 50 most influential people in Connecticut in the fight against diabetes.



**CLASS OF 2009**  
**Daniel A. Vece, Jr., of Clinton**

Daniel Vece enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1943 before graduating from high school. He saw fighting at the Battle of Iwo Jima and is an organizer of the Iwo Jima Memorial in New Britain. He is a member of the Iwo Jima Survivors Association and is a frequent national speaker with other Iwo Jima survivors. He served as First Selectman of Clinton and held office on the Board of Selectmen for 13 years. A lifetime member of the Clinton Volunteer Fire Department and Fire Chief for 25 years, the Clinton Fire Department's annual "Firefighter of the Year" award is named after Chief Vece. During his tenure as chief he helped bring regional 24-hour EMS services to shoreline towns and was appointed by Governor Ella Grasso to serve as Chairman of the Emergency 911

Implementation Committee, which made Connecticut the second state in the nation to join the E-911 Program. He is a former senior member of the state Economic Development Commission and Public Works Commission. He has received the Clinton Distinguished Citizen Award, the Chamber of Commerce "Man of the Year Award" and the Clinton Spirit Award. He is an active member of the American Legion, VFW and Lions Clubs. Mr. Vece was co-owner of Shore TV and Appliance Store from 1957 through 1982.



**CLASS OF 2006**  
**Carl Roderick Venditto (Southington)**

Mr. Venditto is a U.S. Marine veteran of the Korean War-era who served both on active duty and in the Marine Corps Reserves for 35 years as a commissioned officer. A longtime public school teacher and administrator, he has assisted Reservists for over 20 years with employer and mobilization issues as an ombudsman and advocate, including service as chairman of DoD's Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Committee for Connecticut.



**CLASS OF 2006**  
**Edward Washburn Whitaker**  
**(Killingly and Ashford) (Awarded Posthumously)**

Mr. Whitaker, a native of Killingly and graduate of Ashford public schools, fought in 82 engagements during the Civil War as a member of the First Regiment Connecticut Cavalry Volunteers rising to the rank of brevet brigadier general at the age of 23. He was awarded the *Congressional Medal of Honor* for his gallant actions at Reams Station, Virginia in June 1864. After the War, he served as superintendent of the U.S. Capitol Building and was appointed postmaster of Hartford by President Grant.

During his post-war years in Connecticut, he organized and led several new veterans' organizations.

**[Accepting are the nominator: John Regan and Mr. Whitaker's great-great-great grandnephew: Timmy Stearns, In Civil War Uniform]**



**CLASS OF 2009**  
**Homer L. Wise**  
**(posthumous award;formerly of Stamford)**

Homer Lee Wise, a U.S. Army staff sergeant, was awarded the ***Congressional Medal of Honor*** for his courageous actions on June 14, 1944, in Magliano, Italy. He landed in Salerno, Italy on September 9, 1943, and continued his valor in action throughout Italy, including Naples and Rome, until August 1944 when he participated in the invasion of Southern France. He was pulled from combat in November 1944 to be presented the Medal of Honor by Lieutenant General Alexander M. Patch, Commander of the Seventh Army in Epinal, France. Sgt. Wise became one of the most highly decorated infantrymen of World War II – a recipient of the Silver Star, Bronze Star with Valor Device, Purple Heart with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Italian Military Cross of Valor, French Croix DeGuerre and the Combat Infantryman’s Badge. Sgt. Wise was discharged in 1945 and reenlisted in the Army in 1947, serving in multiple recruiting and administrative positions in Stamford, Germany, France, Italy and Ft. Devens, Massachusetts. He received the high honor of being selected as one of six honorary pall bearers at the dedication of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in 1958 under President Dwight D. Eisenhower. He retired from the U.S. Army in 1966 with the rank of master sergeant and then worked in the Stamford area, where he was known locally for his humility regarding his heroic deeds and frequent individual kindnesses to neighbors and strangers.

