

Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno, Brigadier General Michael Cunniff and Congressman Jon Runyan Recognize 46 Brave New Jersey Veterans With Medals for their Service

Tuesday, October 23, 2012

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Heroes from Ocean, Atlantic, Middlesex and Bergen Counties Honored for Service to America

Trenton, NJ – Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno, joined by Brigadier General Michael Cunniff, Congressman Jon Runyan and members of the New Jersey veterans community, presented medals to 46 brave New Jersey veterans in recognition of their outstanding individual service and sacrifice to America. The medals, recognizing the distinction of New Jerseyans in conflicts going back to World War II, were presented today during a ceremony in Toms River.

The event was hosted by the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) as part of the Christie Administration's ongoing efforts to honor veterans and their families. The event also served as an opportunity to share information about benefits or entitlements for veterans - helping connect even more New Jersey veterans with critical supports and services.

"These courageous men and women fought with distinction in the defense of our nation and our ideals of freedom, liberty and justice," said Lt. Governor Guadagno. "These servicemembers represent the very best of our state and nation and we will continue to honor their commitment and the great legacy they leave behind for future generations of Americans. I am proud to recognize these heroes today."

Today's medal recipients include veterans from numerous military branches that served during World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Operation Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. In addition to the veterans kiosk, DMAVA has many programs available to protect and assist New Jersey's veterans, including Regional Family Assistance Centers, Veteran's Hotline and a statewide network of Veterans Service Officers.

"It is my great honor to join Lt. Governor Guadagno and Brigadier General Cunniff in expressing our gratitude to our veteran heroes and their families. These veterans have done so much for our country, and it is a privilege to have the opportunity to thank them and their families for their service, and to honor them for their courage and sacrifice," said Congressman Runyan, who represents Ocean County constituents and serves on both the House Armed Services Committee and the House Committee on Veterans Affairs.

Governor Christie continues to demonstrate his commitment to veterans and their families. His Fiscal Year 2013 Budget expands the highly effective Veterans Haven program to serve veterans in the northern part of the state at the site of Hagedorn Psychiatric Hospital. Since taking office, Governor Christie has signed legislation that strengthens the support network for military families after the death of a service member; establishes a program that awards high school diplomas to veterans who dropped out of school to serve in World War II, Korea and Vietnam; honors Gold Star Families with a special license plate for families of members of the military killed in action for their sacrifice; establishes the New Jersey National Guard State Family Readiness Council Fund; ensures funding for the Veteran to Veteran Peer Support Program telephone helpline and reinvigorates programs like Helmets2Hardhats to put veterans back to work.

"Today's ceremony is a great opportunity for the people of New Jersey to express their gratitude to these veterans for their service to our state and nation," said Brigadier General Michael Cunniff, the Adjutant General. "Beyond the ceremony, the veterans kiosk affords us an opportunity to reach other men and women who have served and to make sure they are taking advantage of every financial and educational entitlement they have earned."

DMAVA will staff an information kiosk at the Ocean County Mall from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. beginning today through October 25. Information on medical, pension, education and other benefits for eligible veterans will be available. Veterans who miss the opportunity to visit the mall kiosk can call DMAVA's toll free benefits information line any time at 1-888-8NJ VETS.

Medal Award Honorees:

Name	Branch	War	Medal	Town
Specialist Four John F. Conard	Army	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	BarNEGat
Specialist Five James Reiser, Jr.	Army	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM with Cluster	BarNEGat

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Lieutenant Colonel Robert F. Hein	Army	Iraqi Freedom	DSM with Cluster	Bay Head
Specialist Four Daniel T.Q. Higgins	Army	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Beachwood
Corporal Raymond C. Nelson	Marine Corps	Iraqi Freedom	DSM	Bergenfield
Sergeant John D. Bennette	Army	Desert Storm	DSM	Brick
Corporal Marc J. Boucher	Marine Corps	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Brick
Lance Corporal Michael P. Connallon	Marine Corps	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Brick
Sergeant Albert D. Higgins	Air Force	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Brick
Corporal Marc A. Madding	Marine Corps	Iraqi Freedom	DSM with Cluster	Brick
First Lieutenant Philip T. Pesano	Army	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM with Cluster	Brick
Corporal William H. Robbins	Marine Corps	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Brick
Sergeant Carl A. Fleming, Jr.	Army	World War II	DSM	Colonia
Sergeant Richard A. Anderson	Marine Corps	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM (Posthumous)	Forked River
Lieutenant Junior Grade Victor F. Cruz, Jr.	Navy	Iraqi Freedom	DSM	Hammonton
Chief Warrant Officer Two Thomas J. Taggart III	Army	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM with Cluster	Jackson
Staff Sergeant Thomas F. Corbutt	Army	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM with Cluster	Lakewood
Specialist Five Gary R. May	Army	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Lakewood
Staff Sergeant Vanessa R. Beaulieu	Air Force	Enduring Freedom	DSM	Little Egg Harbor
Corporal Andrew S. Brys	Marine Corps	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Little Egg Harbor
Sergeant William Pierznik	Air Force	Vietnam War	MSM & VSM	Little Egg Harbor
Sergeant Robert C. Angellella	Marine Corps	Enduring Freedom	DSM with Cluster	Manahawkin
Specialist Four Henry P. Brandt	Army	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Manahawkin
Petty Officer Second Class James E. Freehauf	Navy	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM with Cluster	Manahawkin
Sergeant John E. Roberts	Marine Corps	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Manahawkin
Corporal Robert J. Rupprecht	Marine Corps	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Manahawkin
Sergeant Jarad Rutko	Army	Iraqi Freedom	DSM	Manahawkin
Lance Corporal Frederick M. Weintraub	Marine Corps	Vietnam War	MSM & VSM	Manchester
Corporal George R. Rapciewicz, Jr.	Marine Corps	Iraqi Freedom	DSM	New Egypt
Sergeant Neil C. Bennette	Marine Corps	Iraqi Freedom	DSM	Toms River
Lance Corporal Christopher J. Bergin	Marine Corps	Iraqi Freedom	DSM	Toms River
Specialist Felipe A. Caamano	Army	Enduring Freedom	DSM	Toms River
Corporal Robert Cannon	Marine Corps	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Toms River
First Lieutenant Donald F. Dwyer	Army	World War II	DSM with Cluster	Toms River
Sergeant Robert E. Eilers	Army	World War II	DSM	Toms River
Technician Fifth Class Clarence I. Hyer, Sr.	Army	World War II	DSM (Posthumous)	Toms River
Seaman Patrick Marques	Navy	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM with Cluster	Toms River
Private First Class Philip Montagno	Army	Vietnam War	MSM & VSM	Toms River
Specialist Four Lee F. Roth	Army	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Toms River
Specialist Five Raymond C. Sandford Jr	Army	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Toms River
Specialist Jason A. Purcell	Army	Iraqi Freedom	DSM	Tuckerton
Specialist Four Bogdan Demianiuk	Army	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM	Waretown

Corporal Thomas F. Farley	Army	Korean War	DSM & KSM (Posthumous)	Whiting
Colonel Thomas E. Fleming	Army	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM with Cluster	Whiting
Quartermaster Chief Frederick M. Gerdes, Jr.	Navy	Enduring Freedom	DSM	Whiting
Sergeant Matthew Vidovich	Marine Corps	Vietnam War	DSM & VSM with Cluster	Whiting

DSM – Distinguished Service Medal

MSM – Meritorious Service Medal

KSM – Korean Service Medal

VSM – Vietnam Service Medal

POW – Prisoner of War Medal

“With Cluster” – “With Cluster” means the award will have a “cluster leaf” on it. This signifies that the person is receiving the award for the second time or third time. An individual can receive the same award for multiple events but only wear one on the uniform. The leaf indicates that the individual earned it more than once.

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