



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

## Senator Young Honors Seneca Vets

CATHARINE YOUNG July 29, 2009

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Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – Olean) was joined by members of the American Legion Post #1587 and Seneca nation officials recently to make a special presentation to honor Seneca veterans for military service at the annual Salamanca Allegany Casino Veteran’s Powwow.

Morris “Morrie” Abrams was presented the Bronze Star Medal for Valor for distinguished acts of heroism displayed during the Vietnam War. Abrams served for 14 months in the US Army assigned to Cambodia and has waited almost 40 years to receive the honor.

“Morrie is a true example of a hero, who went above and beyond the call of duty in the most dire of circumstances,” said Sen. Young. “His valor, commitment and brave deeds allow him to stand out as a remarkable person and patriot.”

Abrams was also presented with the Warriors Medal of Valor and Certificate from the Native American Nations for valorous service in a military capacity by “Joe” Curry, a veteran and Advocate for Native American Veterans Affairs.

“People forget that the powwow is about more than the dancing, the food, the gathering,” said Curry. “It is also about honoring our Native men and women who have dedicated themselves in service to

our country, recognizing their valor and devotion to the nation.”

Abrams was a Specialist Four assigned to the 199th Infantry Brigade, when on May 13, 1970, two companies of 600 armed enemy soldiers attacked his heavily outnumbered Support Base in Cambodia. Abrams immediately maneuvered through the intense hostile fire to the only mortar tube on the base and began placing a heavy volume of mortar fire on the enemy until they withdrew.

The 199th Infantry Brigade “Redcatchers” is often one of the most overlooked and underrated U.S. Infantry units to serve during the Vietnam War. The brigade arrived in Vietnam in December 1966 and participated in the heaviest fighting of the war during the Communist command's Tet offensive in 1968. Units of the brigade also took part in the American offensive into Cambodia in 1969

Morrie is a member of the turtle clan and a past Councilor of the Seneca Nation. He is a graduate of Salamanca High School and Fredonia State University. In 1996, Morrie was inducted into the Western New York Softball Hall of Fame. He was a member of the Iron Workers Union #6 out of Buffalo, NY, and retired in 2002.

Sen. Young also participated in presenting former SNI President Maurice John with an eagle feather and a plaque of gratitude for his military service and support of the American Legion Post #1587.

“We hold our Native Warriors in high esteem and today, we honor and recognize the sacrifices, the contributions, and the bravery that our Native Warriors have given in service toward the freedom of all Americans,” said Powwow Committee Chair Jacqueline Bowen who assisted in the honors presentation. “Our Native Warriors represent our tribes with pride and honor.”

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