



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Father and Son Honored in Veterans Day Medal Ceremony

CATHARINE YOUNG November 11, 2013

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Jesse Skinner Sr. and Jesse Skinner Jr. Receive Awards for Military Service

OLEAN - Recognizing their outstanding records of military service, U.S. Army veterans Jesse Skinner Jr. and his late father Jesse Skinner Sr. have finally received the military decorations they deserve.

During a ceremony at Jamestown Community College's Dresser Rand Training & Conference Center in Olean today, Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – Olean) presented Sergeant First Class Jesse Skinner Jr. with the military medals he and his late father, Private First Class

Jesse Skinner Sr., earned while serving overseas. After being contacted by the Skinner family, Senator Young worked to ensure the honorable service of these two veterans was duly recognized and they received the long overdue awards their service warrants.

“Our veterans deserve our deepest appreciation and gratitude, not just on Veterans Day, but every day. But especially on Veterans Day we pay tribute to those who have given so much for our country. It is fitting that we honor Sergeant First Class Jesse Skinner and his father today. Along with two of his five sons, Jason and Justin, and daughter-in-law Latrisha, who have all answered the call to military service, the Skinners serve as great representatives of three generations of proud Americans who have upheld the highest traditions of our armed forces,” said Senator Young.

The late Pfc. Jesse Skinner Sr., a native of Tallulah, Louisiana, passed away on June 28, 1999 and was honored posthumously. On January 18, 1951, while living in Texas, Private Skinner joined the U.S. Army. Soon after basic training, he would be in Germany serving with the Army Occupation Forces.

Trained and operating as a wireman, Private Skinner was assigned to the Army’s 581st Engineers Field Maintenance Co., HQ 523rd Engineer Services Battalion. Working with the Battalion’s Chinon Engineer Depot, Private Skinner and his fellow soldiers were responsible for all maintenance and support operations of Army and NATO units within their geographic zone, even while living in harsh and primitive field conditions.

Private Skinner was discharged on December 20, 1952, having served in the Army for one year, 11 months, and three days during the Korean War era. One year and six months of his service time was spent in Germany.

Sgt. 1st Class Jesse Skinner Jr. accepted the Army of Occupation Medal with Germany Clasp, the National Defense Service Medal, the Sharpshooter Badge with Rifle Bar, the Marksman Badge with Carbine Bar, and the New York State Medal for Merit in his father’s honor.

Sgt. 1st Class Skinner, an Olean resident, followed in his father’s footsteps and also served our country overseas with the Army. Born in Hammond Lake, Indiana, he joined the Army in January 1975. His active duty military service of over two decades would take him on five overseas tours totaling eight years.

Sergeant Skinner was trained as a signal support systems specialist and during his years of service in the Army was responsible for the repair, maintenance, and disposition of Army radio and electronic communications. In this capacity, he served with the U.S. Army’s 212th Field Artillery, 1st Infantry Division. Of his five overseas tours, three were in Germany, one in Korea, and one in Iraq during the Persian Gulf War. While in Iraq, Sergeant First Class

Skinner was in the field with the 18th Airborne Corps.

On February 28, 1997, having served 22 years and two months, Sergeant Skinner retired from the Army.

Today, along with accepting his father's awards on his behalf, Sergeant Skinner was presented with the Korea Defense Service Medal and the Conspicuous Service Cross for his own service.

The occasion of being honored with his father was made all the more significant for Sergeant Skinner because of the long and extensive tradition of military service in his family. His father, his wife Patricia, his son Jason, his twin brother Jerome, and most of his uncles are all veterans. Patricia's late father Robert Lee Green and her uncles are also military veterans.

Sergeant Skinner's son Justin, and Justin's wife Latrisha, are also both currently serving in the Air Force and just departed the United States for Japan yesterday.

Although Sergeant Skinner knew his father served in the military, like so many other humble veterans, he did not speak too much about his experiences. It was when Sergeant Skinner and his wife Patricia came across his father's discharge papers that they decided to look deeper into his records and the details of his service. When they found out that he may be eligible for medals that he never received while alive, they contacted Senator Young's office to see what honors might be in order and to make sure he received the awards he deserves.

"We come from a long military heritage in our families, and it's great that it's been passed on through the generations. Our parents served, we were both honored to serve, and now our children have carried on that tradition. We are very proud to have been able to continue to pass on this legacy of service to our country, which has give us so much," said Patricia Skinner.

"The commitment to military service of these men and their entire family is an inspiration for us all. As a nation we owe them a great debt of gratitude. They are role models whose service to our nation inspires and motivates us to also commit ourselves to serving our country," said Senator Young.

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