William O. Stratis

WILLIAM LARKIN   June 9, 2011
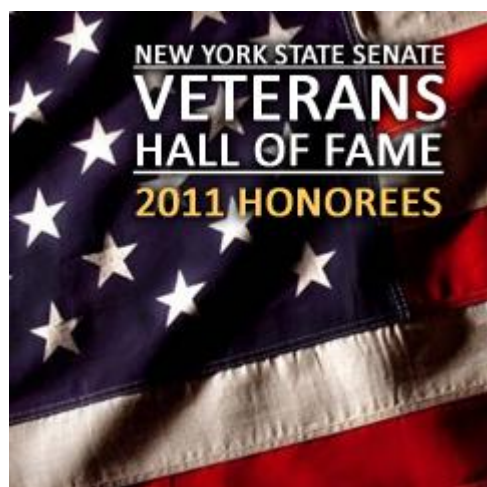
William O. Stratis

Award: Veterans' Hall of Fame

Year: 2011

William O. Stratis was born on May 25, 1926 in Newburgh, New York. After growing up and attending school in Newburgh, he graduated from Newburgh Free Academy in June of 1944 with honors. In August of 1944 he reentered military service and took Infantry Basic Training at Camp Croft in Spartanburg, South Carolina.

Mr. Stratis saw combat in Europe, France, Belgium and Germany. He was captured and taken Prisoner of War while in Germany and was held for over two months at Stalag 6a in Hemer Germany near Dortmund.

Mr. Stratis was wounded twice and received the Purple Heart for his injuries. He was also awarded the Combat Infantry Badge and Bronze Star for his actions. He returned to the United States to train recruits and then went on to Fort Knox to serve in a field demonstration unit for visiting VIP's. He served two years of active duty in the Army and attained the rank of Sergeant before his discharge.

Taking advantage of the GI bill, he attended Rider University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration. He consistently made the Dean's List and owing to his hard work, completed his four year degree in three years.

After college, Ms. Stratis went to work for Chester Cable and then for IBM for 34 years. After taking advantage of early retirement, he became a Financial Planner, became a member of the American Ex-Prisoners of War and studied to become a Certified National Service Officer. Mr. Stratis selflessly gives of his time volunteering five days a week at Castle Point Veteran's Hospital, helping process claims for veterans and their spouses. Every year, over 4 million dollars goes to the families he has assisted through his volunteer work at Castle Point.

Mr. Stratis makes his home in New Windsor, New York and has been married to his wife Joyce for 54 years. They have four daughters and seven grandchildren.