

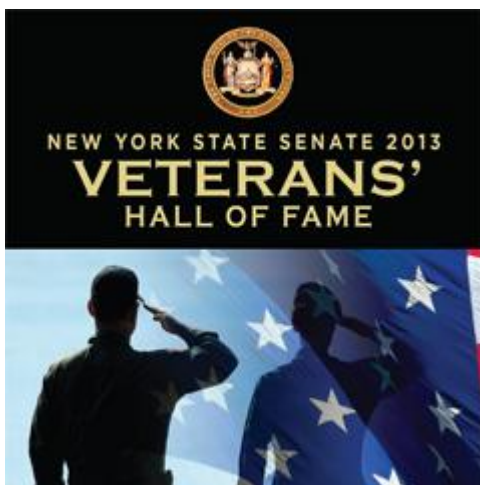


NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

Robert Danke

MICHAEL GIANARIS May 19, 2013



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Award: Honoring Our Veterans

Year: 2013

Robert (Bob) Danke and his wife Loretta are lifelong residents of Astoria, Queens. World War II broke out when Bob was just 17 years old. Bob was too young to enlist in the service without his father's signature on a form granting him permission, but that did not stop him from serving his country. In fact, Bob's dad would also enlist just a few months later, although he was 50 at the time.

Bob's first taste of combat came on the beaches of Salerno, Italy in September 1943. Platoon C-7 of the Naval Fourth Beach Battalion landed on Yellow Beach under heavy fire. As the battle raged, a landing craft became stranded, leaving two wounded Allied soldiers on board, helpless. Bob swam out through a haze of bullets and brought his fellow members of the Allied forces back to safety; doctors from the scene say that he undoubtedly saved their lives. This episode characterizes Robert Danke's distinguished service throughout WWII, which spanned the European, African and Pacific theaters of war. Bob was among the first to land on the beaches of Italy and was at Okinawa when Japan surrendered. Over the course of his service, Bob received the Bronze Star for Valor and the Purple Heart to commemorate wounds he sustained on the beach in Salerno.

After his time in the service, Bob returned to Astoria as a bartender and worked for the phone company in a local office. Bob is a true American hero and his service to our country continues to bring pride to his community. We gratefully thank him for his contributions to Queens, to New York City and to our country.