



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael H. Ranzenhofer

## William R. Wilson III

MICHAEL H. RANZENHOFER May 20, 2013



Staff Sergeant

Staff Sergeant William R. Wilson III

**Award:** Honoring Our Veterans

**Year:** 2013

Staff Sergeant William R. “Billy” Wilson III is a true American hero described as a soldier’s soldier with a passion to serve his community and country.

Known as “Billy” to so many of his family and friends, he grew up in Getzville and graduated from Williamsville North High School in 2003. In 2005, Staff Sgt. Wilson enlisted in the United States Army to protect his fellow citizens. He completed Basic and Advanced training at Fort Knox, graduating five months later.

Staff Sgt. Wilson served as a squad leader for the 2nd Platoon of the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade, headquartered in Grafenwoehr, Germany. He served on two combat deployments to Iraq as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom and one tour of duty during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. While in Afghanistan, he was training Afghan soldiers and police to take over the country’s security. He was killed in action while in Paktika Province, located in the eastern part of Afghanistan, on March 26, 2012. He was 27 years old.

According to his Battalion’s commander, Wilson distinguished himself among 600 soldiers as one of the two top squad leaders. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. He received the National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, and Afghanistan Campaign Medal; as well as the Army Service Ribbon and Overseas Service Ribbon.