



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Bill Perkins

Walter E. Bridgers

BILL PERKINS May 20, 2016

| ISSUE: **VETERANS HALL OF FAME**



Walter E. Bridgers served in the New Jersey Guard for several years and completed his basic training with the award and distinction of “Trainee Leader of the Cycle.” He continued serving his country in the United States Army for an additional 11 years, until he was medically retired at the rank of Sergeant E-5. During his tour, he served bravely as a Combat Medic and a Logistic NCOIC.

Sergeant Bridgers’ determination resulted in his distinguished military career. During his service he received multiple medals and letters of achievement, commendation and

appreciation for leadership. His superiors described him as “highly regarded,” possessing “an excellent reputation among supervisors, peers, and subordinates,” and a “credit” to the United States Army.

While his last five years in the Army proved to be his most challenging, they also propelled him into a new life experience. During that time, Sergeant Bridgers had a life-altering physical injury – he broke his back. After undergoing rehabilitation at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center, he was released but not repaired. Repair required surgery, which was not medically recommended until his condition further deteriorated. This resulted in Sergeant Bridgers’ forced medical retirement in 1986. After his discharge, he decided to pursue a career in psychology so that he could better understand his physical trauma and transition to civilian life.

Today, Sergeant Bridgers is a seasoned professional with a Baccalaureate in Psychology and a Masters in Social Work Administration from Hunter College School of Social Work. He oversees a government facility for veterans and their families, working with men, youth, and family service organizations. He is particularly adept in psycho-educational intervention for post-traumatic stress disorder, war trauma, male involvement in family planning, and in managing clinical staff.

Sergeant Bridgers lives and works by the principle of integrity. Colleagues and clients describe him as a soulful presence, an engaging, humorous, and dynamic teacher and public speaker, and an influential mentor, leader and helper. He has demonstrated ability to coach people through crisis and troubleshoot problems with confidence and humility.