



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

## Sanders Nominates Joe Robert Browne for 2016 Veterans' Hall of Fame

JAMES SANDERS JR. May 24, 2016

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State Senator James Sanders Jr. (D-Rochdale Village) nominated Joe Robert Browne for the 2016 New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame. Browne served two years in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War and helped save the lives of his fellow service members before sustaining severe injuries that ended his military career. He was officially inducted into the Veterans' Hall of Fame at a ceremony in Albany on May 24.

“I am proud to be able to recognize Joe Robert Browne for his bravery and dedication to serving our country,” said Senator Sanders, a Marine Corps veteran. “He is a hero and well deserving of this honor.”

Every year senators from across the state are asked to select a veteran from their district to be inducted into the Veterans' Hall of Fame. The honor was created to recognize and celebrate outstanding service members from the Empire State who have distinguished themselves both in military and civilian life.

In 1966, at age 19, Joe Robert Browne was drafted into U.S. Army. Although he was uncertain about what lay ahead of him, he was proud to have been chosen to defend his country. He served from May 11, 1966 until May 18, 1968, eventually rising to the rank of sergeant. Browne was deployed to Vietnam where he survived enemy fire, mortar attacks and waves of Vietcong.

Despite injuries and obstacles, Sgt. Browne demonstrated courage and heroism throughout his time in the military.

Perhaps the most evident example of this occurred on July 21, 1967. Then-Private First Class Browne and other members of his squad had come under fire while on a mission to assist two Marine platoons that had been ambushed by a Vietnamese Army battalion. After Browne's squad leader had been fatally wounded and began to fall off their truck, Browne anchored himself by wrapping his arm around a blazing hot machine gun barrel, and pulled him back onto the moving vehicle. Although he was in great pain, having been burned severely, Browne remained at his position and loaded all four machine guns until the 10,000 round supply of ammunition was exhausted.

Browne's courageous actions were instrumental in denying the enemy a victory and saved both Marine and Army lives. For his actions he received a Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device, and both a Purple Heart and Purple Heart First Oak Leaf Cluster.

Sgt. Browne also earned a number of other medals and awards during his time in the service. They are: Good Conduct Medal, Bronze Star Medal, The Air Medal, Expert Rifleman, The National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service medal w/1 Bronze Service Star, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal w/ Device and NYS Cold War Recognition Certificate.

After returning to civilian life, Browne married and is the father of seven children, five girls and two boys. He is a pillar of the community, volunteering with many local charities including Teens Against Crime, a non-profit which mentors youth and assists them in finding employment along with providing family counseling. Browne also spends his free time helping his fellow Vietnam Veterans.