



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

## William J. Larkin, Jr.

JOHN J. FLANAGAN May 15, 2017

| ISSUE: **VETERANS HALL OF FAME**



William J. Larkin, Jr., a native of Troy, New York, graduated from LaSalle Institute in Troy, and attended the University of Maryland and the University of Denver. In the United States Army, he served in many key positions, both in the United States and overseas, and saw combat during World War II in the Philippines operation, and during the Korean War.

After 23 years of service, Bill Larkin retired from the Army in 1967 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He was the recipient of the Legion of Merit and seven Army Commendation Medals, and was awarded one Battle Star for the Philippines and six Battle

Stars for the Korean War. After his military service, Senator Larkin served as an Executive Assistant in the New York State Senate, and from 1976-1977 was Supervisor of the Town of New Windsor in Orange County, New York.

Senator Larkin is the former Chairman of the Senate Veterans Committee. As Chairman, he sponsored some of the most sweeping changes in veterans' benefits laws in 30 years. The new laws increased financial protections for families of U.S. service members. Most recently, Senator Larkin sponsored the Veterans' Equality Act, which was signed into law by Governor Cuomo just last year. He continues to serve on the Senate's Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs Committee where he has sponsored numerous laws to assist veterans.

Senator Larkin has led two national campaigns to ensure that our nation does not forget the servicemen and women who have been awarded the Purple Heart Medal for being killed or wounded in combat. His efforts resulted in the United States Postal Service's first issuance of a Purple Heart postage stamp in 2003. The stamp continues to be circulated today.

Senator Larkin also spearheaded the establishment of the Purple Heart Hall of Honor. The Hall collects and preserves the stories of over 100,000 Purple Heart recipients from all branches of service, and includes educational exhibits related to military history and the Purple Heart, which dates back to George Washington.

In 2014, the United States Army presented Senator Larkin with its highest civilian award, the Decoration for Distinguished Civilian Service, in recognition of his decades of service on behalf of veterans. The Certificate from the Department of the Army recognizes Senator Larkin for his extraordinary contributions to the well-being of soldiers, veterans, Army civilians and their families. His support has helped the Army improve its capabilities, readiness and quality of life for them.

Senator Larkin is a member of the Knights of Columbus, Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion and the Disabled American Veterans, and is an honorary member of the West Point Society of New York. He is married to Patricia Kurucz McGuirk Larkin, and between them, they have eight children and 17 grandchildren.

Senator Larkin's continuing commitment and outstanding service to our soldiers, veterans and their families reflects greatly upon him, the State of New York and the United States of America.