



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Timothy M. Kennedy

Thomas F. Higgins

TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY May 15, 2018

| ISSUE: **VETERANS HALL OF FAME**



As a former United States Marine corporal, a Buffalo Police Officer, and later the Sheriff of Erie County, Sheriff Thomas F. Higgins has committed his life to serving his country and his community with passion and dedication.

Born in 1930, Mr. Higgins began his tour of duty with the U.S. Marine Corps at age 21, serving in the 1st Marine Division, 11th Regiment for three years. He was honorably discharged in 1954. Once back in the United States, Mr. Higgins earned degrees from Erie Community

College, Buffalo State College, and the University at Buffalo.

Mr. Higgins went on to serve 21 years in the Buffalo Police Department, originally working as a precinct level detective before earning the rank of Lieutenant, and eventually becoming the Director of the Buffalo Police Academy. In 1997, he began his career as the Undersheriff in the Erie County Sheriff's Department. There, alongside various community organizations, he developed the "First Time/Last Time" program to reduce recidivism rates and promote educational programs through partnerships with the Sheriff's Department, City of Buffalo, and New York State Education Department to help detainees get their GED.

Mr. Higgins was elected Sheriff of Erie County in 1985, serving in that role for 12 years. As Sheriff, he established the Erie County Law Enforcement Foundation, and became the chair of the New York State Sheriffs' Association Scholarship Fund.

Sheriff Higgins' work to better Buffalo extends throughout the community. He has served as the President of the Buffalo Naval and Military Park Board of Directors, President of the Buffalo State College Alumni Association, Chairman of the Korean War Memorial Committee, and a member of the Buffalo Commission on Citizens' Rights and Community Relations.