



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

## STATE SENATOR GUSTAVO RIVERA INDUCTS CLAUDE S. COPELAND, JR. INTO THE 2018 NYS VETERAN'S HALL OF FAME FOR THE 33RD SENATE DISTRICT

GUSTAVO RIVERA May 16, 2018

| ISSUE: **VETERANS HALL OF FAME**

(Albany, NY) - Yesterday, State Senator Gustavo Rivera honored Claude S. Copeland, Jr. at the New York State Senate's 2018 Veteran's Hall of Fame Ceremony. This event seeks to honor those across the state that served as members of the United States Armed Forces and who have served their community with the same honor and dedication. Every year, State Senators across New York State nominate one veteran from their district to be inducted to the Hall of Fame.

Claude S. Copeland, Jr., was a Specialist for the United States Army from May 2001 to November 2008. In 2003, he was deployed to Iraq for almost a year. During his service, he received the Army Achievement Medal and the Good Conduct Medal. Claude currently serves his neighbors and community through his social justice work as the Climate Justice and Energy Democracy Organizer for the Northwest Bronx Community and Clergy Coalition. He is a staunch advocate and focuses his efforts on fighting for oppressed individuals within his community and abroad. Claude found his purpose in social justice work after joining New Day United Methodist Church in the Bronx. Claude is an active member of About Face, a progressive-thinking organization where he helped organize hundreds of veteran members to support the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and others aligned

against an interstate pipeline that was planned for their territory. On a local level, he worked vigorously with the Kingsbridge Armory Redevelopment Association in successfully securing a Community Benefits Agreement for the redevelopment of the Kingsbridge Armory into the country's largest ice sports complex. Claude selflessly dedicates his time to participate in an array of community organizations to improve access and opportunities in underserved communities. Claude Copeland is originally from Queens, NY, but has chosen to make the borough of the Bronx his home.

"I am very proud to honor Mr. Claude S. Copeland, Jr. by inducting him into the New York State Veteran's Hall of Fame for the 33rd Senate District. Claude works closely with my team, and so many others, to address energy access and sustainability by helping families with utility bills and by fighting for climate and environmental justice for the Bronx. Claude shows us every day what being an armed forces member teaches you about service to our country in the name of peace. His commitment to fostering change within his own community and beyond serves as an example to us all," said State Senator Gustavo Rivera.

