



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

## Sanders Nominates US Army Reserves Sgt. Lakia Echols for 2018 NYS Veterans' Hall of Fame

JAMES SANDERS JR. May 15, 2018



State Senator James Sanders Jr. (D-Rochdale Village, Far Rockaway) nominated US Army Reserves Sergeant Lakia Echols of Far Rockaway for the 2018 New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame. She is a Sergeant in the United States Army Reserves pursuing to be a Warrant Officer. She has been in the Army Reserves from 2001 to the present.

“I am proud to recognize Sgt. Echols for her dedication in serving our country and our community,” said Senator Sanders, who is a Marine Corps veteran himself. “She has done so

much to help so many of us and is well deserving of this honor.”

Sgt. Echols has served the nation since 2001 and is pursuing to be a Warrant Officer.

Each year senators from across the State are asked to select a veteran from their district to be inducted into the NYS 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.

“Act as though it’s impossible to fail” is the motto that Sgt. Echols not only lives by but also values.

While deployed in Kuwait from 2004 to 2006, Sgt. Echols was involved in community development and discovered her passion - giving back to the community.

She is the founder of MakeMyMotherProud, an organization that provides guidance and motivation to the youth in Far Rockaway and Queens community towards education and life paths. She also is the Director of The Child Center of NY Redfern in Far Rockaway.

As the Director of the Cornerstone program in one of the most dangerous housing developments in Far Rockaway, Sgt. Echols utilized her military background to encourage youth faced with life challenges to join military service. She managed to help several young men and women get off the streets and pursue a career within the service or at an educational institution.

Sgt. Echols also stepped forward when Hurricane Sandy struck in 2012. She quickly mobilized assistance for community residents who could not reach a distribution center, bringing food and materials directly to them. Sgt. Echols also helped raise \$20,000 from private companies that went directly to families affected by the storm.

Sgt. Echols gives selfless service to her community and started several annual events such as the Cinderella Ball Adult Prom, Santa Sleigh Run, Stack Bundles Stop the Violence Basketball Tournament, and Women's Softball League and Empowerment group.

Sgt. Echols, a single mother, is a motivational speaker leadership teacher and highly motivated community leader. She earned a Bachelor's Degree in Organizing Management from St. Joseph's College and is currently pursuing her Master's degree at St. John's University.