



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

## SENATOR HOYLMAN INDUCTS GAY WW II VET & ACCLAIMED POET EDWARD FIELD INTO NYS SENATE VETERANS' HALL OF FAME

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL May 16, 2018



ALBANY – State Senator Brad Hoylman (D/WF-Manhattan) nominated World War II veteran and acclaimed poet 1st Lt. Edward Field for induction into the 2018 NYS Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame, which recognizes outstanding veterans who have distinguished military and civilian lives. Senator Hoylman was joined in Albany to honor 1st Lieutenant Edward Field by SAGE, the country's largest and oldest organization dedicated to improving the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) older adults.

State Senator Brad Hoylman said: “Over his 93 years, Edward Field has made enormous contributions to our state and nation. From enlisting in the Air Force to fight the Nazis and being shot down over the Black Sea, to becoming an important literary voice for the LGBT community in Greenwich Village, 1st Lieutenant Field’s military service and artistic endeavors are extraordinary and commendable. I’m so proud to join SAGE in recognizing a gay military hero and award-winning poet by inducting Lieutenant Field into the NYS Senate Veterans’ Hall of Fame. Mr. Field is also living proof of the success of Westbeth Artists’ Housing, where he has lived and created his body of work in my Senate district since the 1970s.”

SAGE CEO Michael Adams said: “Edward Field is a hero. His dedication to his country illustrates how valuable LGBT service members are to our military. Thank you to Senator Hoylman for his support of Edward, and his championship of LGBT elders in his Manhattan district and across New York State.”

Air Force 1st Lieutenant Edward Field was born in Brooklyn, New York and attended New York University. He served in World War II as a navigator in heavy bombers, and flew 27 missions on a B-17 in 1945. Lt. Field narrowly escaped death when, on his third mission over Berlin, severe engine damage forced him to crash-land his bomber in the North Sea. Lt. Field’s fellow airman, Jack Coleman Cook, died to save him by giving up his place in the life boat for Lt. Field. This act of selflessness and valor would remain with Lt. Field for the remainder of his life.

After the war and a period of recovery, Lt. Field went to Paris to become a poet. Later, he moved back to New York City where he lived with his partner, Neil Derrick, for 58 years until Derrick's recent passing. Field’s enduring attachment to the bohemian spirit of Greenwich Village, where he has been a resident for nearly half a century, figures prominently into his work. A prolific and renowned writer, Field has written ten books of poetry, multiple

memoirs, a travel book, and the narration for an Academy Award winning documentary, *To Be Alive* (1965). He is also the recipient of numerous awards, including the Lamont Award from the Academy of American Poets, the Shelley Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America, the Prix de Rome from the American Academy of Arts & Letters, and the Lambda Literary Award.

The New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame was created to honor and recognize outstanding New York veterans who have distinguished themselves both in military and civilian life. According to the State Senate, "their meritorious service to our nation deserves the special recognition that only a Hall of Fame can provide, as a fitting expression of our gratitude and admiration." Annually, Senators name a veteran from their district to a place in the Veterans Hall of Fame.

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