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## **Retired U.S. Army Master Sergeant and Portville Resident Francisco ‘Frank’ Morales Inducted into the New York State Senate Veterans’ Hall of Fame**

*Senator George Borrello nominated Frank Morales for his courageous service to the nation, continued dedication to fellow veterans*



*Senator Borrello named Portville resident Frank Morales as this year’s inductee for the New York State Senate Veterans’ Hall of Fame. The Senator is pictured here with Frank and his family (left to right): Christian, Senator Borrello, Frank, Julian, Isabella and Crystal.*

ALBANY – Francisco “Frank” Morales, a decorated veteran of United States Army and director of the Military Aligned Student Program at St. Bonaventure University, was inducted into the New York State Senate’s Veterans’ Hall of Fame today at a ceremony in Albany.

Master Sgt. Francisco Morales (Ret.) was nominated by Senator George Borrello in recognition of his outstanding service and dedication to the nation and fellow veterans. The annual recognition established

in 2005 is bestowed upon a veteran from each Senate District in the state who has not only served valiantly in the military but has also made outstanding contributions on behalf of their community as a civilian.

“Frank Morales enlisted in the U.S. Army as an infantryman and served 20 years with tremendous distinction, ultimately attaining the rank of Master Sergeant. Among his many awards is the Silver Star Medal, which was bestowed for his heroic actions on August 26, 2006, when Morales's unit was ambushed by over 60 Taliban. Morales was able to lead his men through the battle and save four wounded soldiers,” said Senator Borrello.

“The motto of the U.S. Army is ‘This We’ll Defend.’ It’s a vow that Frank Morales embraced as an active member of the military and as a civilian, in his role as Director of the St. Bonaventure Office of Veteran Service, where he mentors his fellow veterans and helps them prepare for a successful transition back into civilian life. It was my honor to be able to recognize him and have his story memorialized in the state’s history,” Senator Borrello said.

Senator Borrello noted that Mr. Morales’s Army tenure also included deployments in the Balkans, Africa, and twice to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Morales's final U.S. Army assignment was to St. Bonaventure as a senior Military Science instructor in the university’s Army ROTC program.

In addition to receiving the Silver Star Medal for his valor, he also received the Bronze Star for meritorious service in combat. After 20 years of service, he received numerous awards for achievement and earned the Combat and Expert Infantry Badges, the Parachutist Badge, the Pathfinder Badge, and the Drill Sergeant Badge.

After concluding his Army tenure, Mr. Morales attended graduate school, earning a Master of Mental Health Counseling, and working in counseling for several years before becoming the Director of the St. Bonaventure Office of Veteran Services.

“Frank is an incredible leader, and we are fortunate to have him leading our Military Aligned Program that supports Veterans and their families. He is an advocate for all Veterans and a valuable resource throughout the southern tier,” **said Bernard Valento, Vice President for Enrollment, St. Bonaventure University.**

He has also created a legacy at St. Bonaventure, with two of his sons graduating from the university and being inducted into the university’s ROTC Hall of Fame.

Currently, Frank spends his time helping veterans in all aspects of life. He is also a mentor for community veteran programs in western NY and is sought after for his expertise. He currently lives in Portville, New York, with his wife Crystal and his children Christian, Julian, and Isabella.

Senator Borrello will honor Mr. Morales at a special ceremony at St. Bonaventure University at a date which will be announced.

Frank Morales’s full biography will remain on display in perpetuity in the Senate’s Veterans’ Hall of Fame online directory. A copy of the biography can be seen at [link to come].

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*Joining Senator Borrello and honoree Frank Morales are Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Bernard Valento, Vice President for Enrollment, St. Bonaventure University.*