



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

## Senator Gianaris Honors Astoria WWII Hero as Veteran's Hall of Fame Inductee

MICHAEL GIANARIS June 26, 2013

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(Astoria, NY) Senator Michael Gianaris honored lifelong Astoria resident and World War II hero Robert (Bob) Danke as an inductee into the New York State Senate Veteran's Hall of Fame. The Veteran's Hall of Fame is designed to pay tribute to New Yorkers whose gallantry in the U.S. Armed Forces is complemented by service to their communities. Mr. Danke was officially inducted into the Veteran's Hall of Fame at a May 21<sup>st</sup> ceremony in Albany. Senator Gianaris presented the former Navy Seaman First Class with an official certificate and poster outside his home in Astoria.

"Bob Danke is a true American hero and I am grateful for the opportunity to commemorate the services he rendered his country and his community," Senator Gianaris said. "He fought bravely to protect our country's freedom and he is a neighbor of whom all of us in Astoria can be proud."

Mr. Danke displayed extraordinary bravery on the beaches of Salerno, Italy in September 1943. He swam through a haze of bullets to rescue two fellow members of the Allied forces who were stranded and helpless on a landing craft; doctors from the scene say that he undoubtedly saved their lives. He received the Purple Heart for injuries sustained in his efforts. This episode characterizes Robert Danke's distinguished service throughout WWII, which spanned the European, African and Pacific theaters of war. Mr. Danke was among the first to land on the beaches of Italy and was at Okinawa when Japan surrendered. Over the course of his service, he also received the Bronze Star for Valor.

Mr. Danke and his wife Loretta are both lifelong Astoria residents. After his time in the service, Mr. Danke returned home and worked as a bartender and for the phone company in a local office, becoming a fixture of the community.

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