



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

## Harckham Honors Alex Mandara for NYS Veterans Hall of Fame Induction

PETE HARCKHAM December 5, 2023

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State Sen. Harckham with Alex Mandara and Dr. Loree Sutton

*Bedford Hills, NY* – New York State Senator Pete Harckham honored Alex Mandara for his induction into the 2023 New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame and commemorated his military service at a special ceremony held on Saturday, Dec. 2, here at the Bedford Hills Community Center, with nearly 50 veterans and several local officials in attendance.

At the ceremony, which preceded a meeting of the Veterans Advisory Council that Harckham hosts semi-annually, Mandara was presented with a special Senate plaque regarding his Hall of Fame induction.

“Alex served his country with distinction and is a respected leader in the Yorktown community, where he continues to make an impact on the lives of his neighbors and fellow veterans,” said Harckham. “Through his role at the Yorktown VFW, Alex is a tireless advocate for veterans and their families, coordinating programs and services for them, and ensuring they get the help they may require. It was my distinct honor to nominate Alex for induction as the 40th Senate District’s 2023 selection to the New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame.”

To see a video of the special ceremony honoring Alex Mandara, click [here](#).

Mandara serves as the Commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8328 in Yorktown Heights, an essential gathering space for the community, allowing veterans to connect with other veterans. He was born on September 11, 1972, in the Bronx, the oldest of 5 siblings, and attended Yonkers public schools. After graduating from Roosevelt High School at 17, he decided to serve his country and enlisted in the U.S. Navy, following in the footsteps of a grandfather who had served in the U.S. Army.

After completing boot camp at Naval Station Great Lakes north of Chicago, Mandara studied to become a hull maintenance technician, and in 1991 began his service on USS Enterprise, the U.S. Navy’s first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, during the Gulf War. Mandara continued his service on the USS Enterprise for the next five years, finally being stationed out of Norfolk, Virginia. As a member of the U.S. Navy Reserve, Mandara spent 22 years serving on the USS Ogden, an Austin-class amphibious transport dock, and traveled around the world.

After the September 11th attacks, Mandara spent many long days searching through rubble of the World Trade Center's Twin Towers until he was called to active duty.

Mandara and his wife Annamaria moved to Yorktown in 2005, and three years later their daughter Gianna Maria Mandara was born. Mandara retired from the U.S. Navy Reserve in November 2012 and started working for Entergy Nuclear at the Indian Point Energy Center, where he remains a part of the security operations at the site. He also works as an umpire for Westchester's Section 1 High School Baseball and regional travel leagues.

"As I noted in my retirement speech (from the Navy), we retire but we never get out," said Mandara after accepting his award from Harckham. "My wife and I enjoy working and helping out other veterans. It's a natural progression to serve in the military and then continue to look for other ways to serve."

Yorktown Town Supervisor Tom Diana said, "I met Alex Mandara a number of years ago, and am proud to call him my friend. He does so much for our community, and like a lot of people who serve our community, he is the glue that holds us together.

The Veterans Advisory Council meeting that followed the award ceremony featured (Ret.) Brigadier General Loree Sutton, the U.S. Army's highest-ranking psychiatrist and former Commissioner of New York City's Department of Veterans' Services, as a guest speaker. The Peekskill resident, who has devoted over 35 years of service to the nation, talked about the many challenges that veterans face, including post-traumatic stress disorder and housing issues.