



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patrick M. Gallivan

## Senator Gallivan Honors Hamburg Veteran

JIM RANNEY May 28, 2025

| ISSUE: **VETERAN HALL OF FAME**



### Max Donatelli Named to NYS Senate Veterans Hall of Fame

Senator Patrick M. Gallivan (R-C-I, Elma) is naming U.S. Air Force veteran Max Donatelli of Hamburg to the New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame. Sergeant Donatelli worked as an aircraft mechanic in Vietnam, and taught English to Vietnamese children on base. While enlisted from 1968 to 1972, he earned several prominent honors, including the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and Republic of Vietnam Service Medal.

“Max Donatelli was a proud member of the United States Air Force and served our country with honor and distinction in Vietnam,” Senator Gallivan said. “His commitment to service continues today through his work on behalf of individuals facing mental health challenges and their families. I thank Max for his ongoing service to our country and the Western New York community.”

Mr. Donatelli and his wife Joyce have raised two children, Connie, and Craig. Craig has Down syndrome and lives semi-independently and works in competitive employment. The family are staunch advocates for people with developmental disabilities, those with mental health challenges, and for inclusion and equity locally and statewide. He retired from Baker Victory Services in 2016 after 42 years in roles including direct care worker, clinician, director, and department head, helping high risk youth in foster care and families throughout the community. He has a BA degree in psychology and sociology and an MS degree in counselor education, both from Canisius College.

Mr. Donatelli is the former executive director of the Parent Network of Western New York and the co-creator of a new not-for-profit called the Art of Advocacy, Inc. He is former chair and current secretary of the Erie County Community Services Board for Mental Hygiene. He is also a member of the Health Leadership Fellows Action Network, Developmental Disabilities Alliance of WNY Family Committee, and is a founding member of the Hamburg Coalition of Equity and Inclusion, a member of Leadership Buffalo.

Mr. Donatelli is former Vice Chair and current member of the Community Veterans Engagement Board of Western New York, which includes local organizations serving veterans.

In addition, Mr. Donatelli is a founding member and the first chair of the Erie County Anti-Stigma Coalition. He regularly writes articles in the media and speaks publicly on advocacy

topics. He has been honored with several awards, most recently the NY Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation, "Community Advocacy Award," and the National Federation of Just Communities, "Lana Benatovich Lifetime Achievement Award." He is also a 26-gallon Red Cross blood donor.

The New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame honors and recognizes outstanding veterans who have distinguished themselves in military and civilian life. Each honoree's photograph and biography are part of a special on-line exhibit commemorating the contributions of these exemplary New York veterans.

A ceremony honoring this year's Hall of Fame class was held May 27, 2025, at the Capitol in Albany.