



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Monica R. Martinez

Sen. Martinez Names Michael Kilano as District's 2025 Veteran Hall of Fame Inductee

MONICA R. MARTINEZ June 3, 2025

| ISSUE: NEW YORK STATE SENATE VETERANS HALL OF FAME, U.S. MARINE CORPS VETERAN, PAWS OF WAR, WEST BABYLON, SUFFOLK COUNTY



U.S. Marine Corps veteran Michael Kilano (left) and Sen. Monica R. Martinez (right) during the 2025 New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame inductees' reception held on May 27, 2025, in Albany, NY.

Marine Corps veteran recognized for service both in and out of uniform

New York State Sen. Monica R. Martinez has selected Michael Kilano, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran and longtime advocate for fellow service members, as a 2025 inductee to the New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame representing the Fourth Senatorial District.

Kilano served in the Marine Corps from 1999 to 2003 and was deployed to the Middle East following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, where he participated in Operation Enduring Freedom. His battalion was among the first units sent into Iraq, where he endured intense combat and began to experience the long-term psychological effects of war. Diagnosed with combat-related post-traumatic stress disorder, Kilano continues to face daily challenges as a result of his service. Despite these obstacles, he has dedicated his life to helping others and providing stability for his five children.

While receiving treatment at the Northport VA Medical Center, Kilano was introduced to Paws of War, a Long Island based nonprofit that pairs veterans with trained service dogs. He credits his service dog, Nova, with helping him manage PTSD and strengthen his connection with his family. Inspired by the difference Nova made in his life, Kilano now works full time at Paws of War as Director of Veteran Advocacy and Crisis Coordinator. In this role, he assists with community outreach, coordinates support for veterans in need, and helps transport service dogs to those awaiting companionship and care.

“Michael Kilano’s resilience in the face of combat-related trauma reflects the spirit of determination that defines our nation’s armed forces,” said Sen. Martinez. “Although he still carries the invisible wounds of war, Michael continues to serve his family, his country and his fellow veterans with honor and compassion. This strength has created a path for other veterans with PTSD to find support and healing through the unconditional love of a service animal, and I’m proud to recognize him as this year’s Veterans Hall of Fame inductee.”

The New York State Senate Veterans Hall of Fame was created to honor outstanding veterans from across the state who have not only served with distinction in the U.S. armed forces, but also demonstrated extraordinary dedication to their communities. Each year, state senators select one honoree from their district whose service and continued contributions represent the values of duty, sacrifice and public service. New inductees were

recognized during a ceremony held in Albany on May 27, 2025.