



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrea Stewart-Cousins

Westchester Senate Delegation Honors Korean War Veterans at Commemorative Luncheon

ANDREA STEWART-COUSINS June 23, 2025

| ISSUE: **KOREAN WAR VETERANS**



(Katonah, NY) – The Westchester Senate Delegation, in partnership with Westchester County, hosted a luncheon at Lasdon Park in Katonah on Sunday, June 22, to honor Korean War Veterans from Westchester County. The luncheon brought together more than a dozen Korean War veterans and their families and friends for a day of remembrance and appreciation.

The event was sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Westchester County Executive Ken Jenkins, and Senators Shelley Mayer, Jamaal Bailey, Pete Harckham, and Nathalia Fernandez. Each veteran in attendance received a copy of the **New York State Senate Resolution J548**, celebrating the sacrifices made by New York State's Korean War Veterans.

"Today, we celebrated, honored, and cherished the living legends among us – our Korean War Veterans. With the years marching on, it is more crucial than ever that we take this moment to show them our deepest gratitude, and ensure their sacrifices are never forgotten," **said Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins**. "I thank my Senate colleagues from our Westchester Delegation, as well as County Executive Ken Jenkins, for coming together for this wonderful event."

Attendees heard remarks from the elected officials and a speech by Korean War Veteran and **New York State Veterans Hall of Fame inductee, Sgt. Randy Jurgensen**, a paratrooper who was **awarded three Bronze Stars and the Purple Heart**, notably for his actions during the Battle of Pork Chop Hill. Daniel Morea from the Westchester County Veterans Service Agency also offered remarks, and the esteemed West Point Brass Quintet provided a patriotic musical backdrop for Sunday's festivities.

State Senator Shelley B. Mayer said, "I am proud to join my colleagues in honoring the Korean War veterans of Westchester County. It has been a privilege to lead the efforts in Albany to recognize their service and sacrifice, and I am grateful to bring this ceremony back to Westchester. We are forever indebted to these brave men and women for their dedication and courage, and we must continue to honor them by sharing their stories and teaching future generations about their sacrifices. I would like to thank Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, County Executive Ken Jenkins, and Senators Harckham, Bailey, and Fernandez for partnering with me to sponsor this ceremony and the West Point Quintet

for their lovely performance. Most importantly, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our courageous veterans and their families.”

Senator Stewart-Cousins and Senator Mayer were also honored for their advocacy for New York’s Veterans with the Military Order of the Purple Heart Special Recognition Award, which was presented by Sgt. Jurgensen and the Patriot Members of Colon Rivera Memorial Chapter 3-NYC.

The guns of the Korean War fell silent more than 70 years ago, and its veterans comprise a majority of America’s oldest combat veterans. New York is home to nearly 70,000 of these heroes, the fourth-highest number of any state in the country.

Westchester County Executive Ken Jenkins said, “Today we honor the courage, sacrifice and enduring legacy of our Korean War veterans. These brave men and women answered the call of duty and stood for freedom at a pivotal moment in history. Westchester County is proud to join the Senate Delegation in paying tribute to their service and ensuring their stories are never forgotten.”

“Less than 1% of our country serves in uniform,” **said Daniel Morea, Veteran Service Officer, Westchester County Veteran Service Agency.** “They take care of 99.9% of the American citizens. They need to be thanked. They are very special people.”

State Senator Jamaal Bailey said, “Our Korean War Veterans stood strong in a time of global uncertainty, defending freedom on distant shores with unwavering courage. At this luncheon, we honor not only their service, but the legacy of dignity, sacrifice, and patriotism they carried home. This is a small token of appreciation. May their stories continue to inspire us to follow their example. Thank you to my colleagues in the Westchester Senate Delegation and Westchester County for making this possible.”

State Senator Pete Harckham said, “The Korean War was a daunting and often harrowing experience for the US service members who fought in it, so recognizing their bravery and valor is only right. This event is just one way to thank these veterans and promise to remember their service and selfless fight for freedom in Asia while also ensuring they continue to get the comprehensive care and assistance they need.”

State Senator Nathalia Fernandez said, “Through this gathering, we remember the men who answered the call and carried our nation’s flag with courage and conviction. Their service reminds us that freedom is never free, and that the Korean War, so often called the 'Forgotten War,' will never be forgotten here in New York. I’m grateful to be part of a Senate delegation that makes it a priority to recognize and honor the veterans of this conflict, ensuring their legacy lives on in our shared history.”

Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins and the Westchester Senate Delegation have been at the forefront of advocating for veterans, securing **historic investments in Gold Star family benefits, veterans’ mental health, and workforce development**. They have also advanced legislation to **ease tax burdens on active-duty servicemembers and disabled veterans**. Thanks to the advocacy of veterans like Sgt. Jurgensen, New York State Korean War Veterans Remembrance Day was established as an annual observance starting in 2023.

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