



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

Senator Grisanti Names Kevin Meehan 'Veteran Of The Month'

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Meehan becomes the first of what will be twelve recipients of a prestigious honor that is presented by Senator Grisanti following an application and nomination process involving the staff who work in Grisanti's veterans liaison office, which is based in the senator's district office.

"I am pleased to recognize Kevin for his outstanding service to our nation," said Senator Grisanti. "He is one of many outstanding veterans who live in Western New York and give back to our community. Much is said in today's society about role models, to which I say take a look at our military veterans if you are seeking someone to emulate and have others look up to and admire."

A resident of Orchard Park, Meehan entered the Massachusetts Army National Guard in 2000 as a combat engineer and completed his training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. He served until April 2004, completing a primary leadership development course and achieving the rank of specialist. His service resulted in a nomination for Massachusetts Soldier.

After completing his time in Massachusetts National Guard, Meehan transitioned into the regular Army on active duty, where he changed his job to an 11B Infantry. After completing his job training at Fort Benning, Georgia he was stationed at Fort Hood Texas where he became part of Alpha Company 2/8 Infantry 4th ID. Having shown his ability to lead and take on great task, Kevin was advanced to the rank of sergeant and deployed to Iraq in November 2005.

While serving in Iraq, Meehan's unit completed hundreds of mission out of FOB Kalsu located on the main MSR Tampa just south of Baghdad. The unit was successful in capturing numerous anti-Iraqi forces, destructing numerous caches and removing countless IED's and helping to secure the area of operations so that the Shiites would feel safe to return. Meehan and his fellow soldiers would conduct raids on local villages looking for high value targets and local militants and setting up "kill teams" at night with the intent of curbing the amount of IED's being placed in their area of operation.

Meehan met his wife Erin while she was on vacation visiting a friend who was stationed in Texas. After spending a year traveling back and forth from Texas to Buffalo, Erin and Kevin were married on July 14, 2006. The birth of their daughter, Elliana May Signore, caused Meehan to rethink his desire for a military career. After serving one year in the Texas National Guard from July 2007 to August 2008, Kevin moved his family to Western New York.

Upon returning to the Buffalo area, Meehan enrolled at UB, where he earned his bachelors degree in business administration with a concentration in finance in 2011, graduating summa cum laude. While a student at UB, he became part of Buffalo's Veterans Court, volunteering his time as a mentor in 2009 and 2010. This allowed Meehan to speak with other veterans who have had similar experiences but ran into legal issues potentially due to post traumatic stress disorder.

Meehan and his family, which also includes a son, Ashton James Signore, feel it is extremely important to help give back and volunteer with various community projects. In the summer of 2011 they donated a significant amount of furniture to Orchard Park Eagle Scout Alex Rand, who used those items to help furnish an apartment for a local injured veteran. More recently, this holiday season they provided gift cards to a veteran and his family who had recently been unemployed and was seeking necessities for his family's home.

Meehan recently joined up with Team RWB, where he has met some great veterans who are doing good things in Western New York. He hopes his time with Team RWB will help to facilitate some other ways in which he can give back to our great community.

"If nothing else, I just hope I can be a role model for others leaving the service after combat and show them it is possible to move on and create a great future for yourself and your family," said Meehan. "Don't be afraid to seek support and remember there is value in what you did in the military. Never sell your service to our nation short."

For more information about Senator Grisanti's "Veterans Of The Month" recognition program, visit www.senatormarkgrisanti.com and click on the "Veterans" tab or call (716) 854-8705.