



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

United States Army Presents Award to Senator Bill Larkin

William J. Larkin Jr.

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ISSUE:

- [Military](#)
- [Veterans](#)

Combat Veteran and State Senator Honored for His Service to Veterans

The United States Army today presented Senator William J. Larkin Jr. (R-C, Cornwall-On-Hudson) with its highest civilian award, the Decoration for Distinguished Civilian Service, in recognition of his decades of distinguished service on behalf of veterans and making a substantial contribution to the accomplishments of the Army's mission.

The award was presented in Albany today by Brigadier General Timothy Trainor, the Dean of the Academic Board at the United States Military Academy at West Point and representing United States Secretary of the Army John McHugh.

In addition, Senate Majority Coalition Co-Leader Dean Skelos presented Senator Larkin with the New York State Senate Veterans Leadership Award. The

presentations came on the day the Senate inducted 57 new members into its Veterans Hall of Fame <http://www.nysenate.gov/honoring-our-veterans> .

“Across New York, and throughout our entire nation, there is no more fierce and relentless advocate for our veterans than Senator Bill Larkin,” Senator Skelos said. “During his decades of public service, he has fought every day to help our veterans with health care, assistance programs, job opportunities -- whatever they needed. And he has always reminded us to never forget their service and their sacrifice, on behalf of our country.”

SERVICE TO VETERANS

During his first term in the Senate in 1991-92, Senator Larkin chaired the Senate Veterans Committee. As chairman, he sponsored some of the most sweeping changes in veterans' benefits laws in 30 years. The new laws increased the financial protections for families of U.S. servicemen fighting in the Persian Gulf War, as well as conflicts in Lebanon, Panama and Grenada. He continues to serve on the Senate's Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs Committee and has sponsored many laws to assist veterans.

SERVICE TO HIS COUNTRY

A veteran of 23 years of active military service, Senator Larkin retired from the United States Army in 1967 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He has served in many key positions, both in the United States and overseas, and saw combat during World War II in the Philippines operation, and during the Korean War. Senator Larkin was the recipient of the Legion of Merit and seven Army Commendation Medals, and was also awarded one Battle Star for the Philippines and six Battle Stars for the Korean War.

REMEMBERING PURPLE HEART RECIPIENTS

Senator Larkin has led two national campaigns to ensure that our nation does not forget the servicemen and women who have been awarded the Purple Heart Medal for being killed or wounded in combat.

Senator Larkin's efforts resulted in the issuance by the United States Postal Service of a Purple Heart postage stamp that was first issued in 2003 and continues to be circulated today.

He also spearheaded the establishment of the Purple Heart Hall of Honor in Vail's Gate, N.Y., near Newburgh. The Hall collects and preserves the stories of tens of thousands of Purple Heart recipients from all branches of service and includes educational exhibits related to military history, and the Purple Heart, which dates back to George Washington.

The Certificate from the Department of the Army was inscribed with the following description of Senator Larkin's service:

For extraordinary contributions to the well-being of Soldiers, Veterans, Army Civilians and their Families. A highly decorated, retired U.S. Army officer who saw combat in both WWII and the Korean War, Senator Larkin has dedicated nearly his entire life to serving our Nation. From his work with the Knights of Columbus and many Veterans Service Organizations, to his years in the New York State Senate, Senator Larkin is the embodiment of patriotism and selfless service. His positive attitude and inspirational leadership while interacting with key community and business leaders in New York have been key factors in sustaining a close relationship between our Army and the American public. His support has helped the Army improve its capabilities, readiness and quality of life for Soldiers, Civilians and Families. Beyond that, his opinions, advice and service as a spokesperson for the Army have been of great value to our military and its leaders. Senator Larkin's outstanding service to our Soldiers, Veterans and their Families reflects great credit upon himself, the State of New York, and the United States of America.

The New York State Senate Veterans Leadership Award includes the following message:

"In recognition of his tireless leadership and tenacious advocacy on behalf of the Empire State's courageous veterans."