



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Sanders Jr.

## Joe Robert Browne

[James Sanders Jr.](#)

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In 1966 at age 19, Joe Robert Browne was drafted into the United States Army. Although he was uncertain about what lay ahead of him, he was proud to have been chosen to defend his country. Mr. Browne served from May 1966 until May 1968, rising to the rank of Sergeant.

Despite injuries and obstacles, Sergeant Browne demonstrated courage and heroism throughout his time in the military. Perhaps the most conspicuous example of this occurred on July 21, 1967. Sergeant Browne and other members of his squad had come under fire while on a mission to assist two Marine platoons that had been ambushed by a Vietnamese army battalion. After his squad leader had been fatally wounded and began to fall off their truck, Sergeant Browne anchored himself by wrapping his arm around a blazing hot machine gun barrel, and pulled him back onto the moving vehicle. Although he was in great pain, having been burned severely, Sergeant Browne remained at his position and loaded all four machine guns until the 10,000 round supply of ammunition was exhausted.

Sergeant Browne's courageous actions were instrumental in denying the enemy a victory and saved both Marine and Army lives. For his actions, he received a Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device, and both a Purple Heart and Purple Heart First Oak Leaf Cluster. Sergeant Browne also earned a number of other medals and awards during his time in the service, including a Good Conduct Medal, a Bronze Star Medal, the Air Medal, Expert Rifleman, the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service medal with one Bronze Service Star, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device and NYS Cold War Recognition Certificate.

After returning to civilian life, Sergeant Browne married and is the father of seven children. He is a pillar of the community, volunteering with many local charities and helping his fellow Vietnam veterans in any way he can.