



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

Squadron Nominates Paul Rieckhoff to 2016 Senate Veteran's Hall of Fame

DANIEL L. SQUADRON May 20, 2016

| ISSUE: **VETERANS HALL OF FAME, VHOF, VETERANS, LOWER MANHATTAN, IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN VETERANS**



Paul Rieckhoff is the founder and CEO of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), America's first and largest Iraq and Afghanistan veteran organization. A nationally recognized authority on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and issues affecting troops, veterans and their families, Mr. Rieckhoff served as an Army First Lieutenant and infantry rifle platoon leader in Iraq from 2003-2004.

Mr. Rieckhoff enlisted in the Army Reserves in 1998, completing basic combat and advanced individual training at Fort McClellan. He served in the Army Reserves, as a Specialist with the 812th Military Police Company. While working on Wall Street, Mr. Rieckhoff transferred to the New York Army National Guard, graduating from Officer Candidate School in 2001, and was named a Distinguished Graduate. He then selected infantry as his branch and joined A Company, 1/105th INF (Light).

Mr. Rieckhoff left Wall Street on September 7, 2001, planning to travel and complete additional military schooling. Those plans changed on 9/11 when he heard the first plane hit the World Trade Center. Mr. Rieckhoff immediately joined volunteers serving in Ground Zero rescue efforts, without a single concern for his own safety – only for the safety of others. His National Guard unit was activated that evening.

In 2002, Mr. Rieckhoff began infantry officers basic course at Fort Benning, graduating in June 2002. In January 2003, he was called to deploy to Iraq, and joined the 3rd Infantry Division at Fort Stewart as a Platoon Leader for 3rd Platoon, B Company, 3/124th INF (Air Assault) FLNG. The unit was attached to 1st Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division and spent almost a year conducting combat operations in Baghdad. All 38 of the men in Mr. Rieckhoff's platoon returned home alive.

Mr. Rieckhoff was released from active duty in March 2004 and from the National Guard in 2007. A New York native, he serves on the State Council on Returning Veterans and their Families – always willing to help his fellow veterans.