



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Heroic Army pilot inducted into NYS Veterans Hall of Fame

TERRENCE MURPHY May 24, 2016

ALBANY, NY - Our servicemen and women do not fight for fame or fortune - they fight for freedom - our freedom. Many have made the ultimate sacrifice to ensure our liberties. In recognition of a local hero, Senator Terrence Murphy has announced the late Major Clayton O. Carpenter, a veteran of the Iraq War, as the 40th Senate District's 2016 inductee into the New York State Veterans' Hall of Fame.

In a ceremony held May 24th in Albany, Senator Murphy presented his mother, Colette Carpenter, with an award honoring his distinguished military career.

"There is no question Clayton Carpenter has earned our enduring gratitude for his bravery and the leadership qualities he exemplified," Senator Murphy said. "Major Carpenter may have been too humble to speak about his own accomplishments, but now generations to come will know about his bravery, his incomparable service record and his devotion to his country."

The New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame was created to honor and recognize outstanding veterans from New York who have distinguished themselves both in military and civilian life.

Veterans' posts, family members, friends and community leaders in the 40th Senate District were invited to make nominations. As this year's inductee, Major Carpenter's photograph and biography will become part of a special on-line exhibit.

"I want to thank Senator Murphy for nominating my son, Clayton, to the New York State Veterans' Hall of Fame. My family and I are honored to see Clayton inducted," said Colette Carpenter. "Although Clayton is no longer with us, I know he would be humbled by this honor. Clayton was committed to serving his God, his country, and his family. He made the ultimate sacrifice when he took action that saved the lives of his crew members. Clay would say he was only doing the right thing. With this Honor, Clay's bravery will always be remembered and appreciated."

Clayton Carpenter was born in Brooklyn, New York, on August 12, 1983, as the first son to Paul Douglas and Colette Borom Carpenter. In 1992, the Carpenter Family moved to Cortlandt Manor, New York, where Clay spent his early years. He was a role model for youth in his church and the community, a focused and deliberate young man who left his mark on anyone he met.

Clay was a scholastic athlete at Lakeland High School, twice serving as the team captain on the boys' track and field team. At 16, he was one of the youngest candidates to pass the EMT examination.

Nominated by former Vice President Al Gore and United States Representative Sue W. Kelly (R-Katonah), Clay accepted an appointment into the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in February 2001, where he graduated with a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Engineering Psychology in 2005. After being commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant, Clay was assigned to Fort Rucker, Alabama, for Initial Entry Rotary Wing Training.

Upon completion of the Aviation Officer Basic Course, he was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment at Wheeler Army Airfield, Hawaii, and deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in June of 2008. He further served in Iraq as a Headquarters Company Commander and was deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in September of 2011. He earned a place with the Night Stalkers, an elite operations unit which flies missions behind enemy lines, in September 2012 as special operations helicopter platoon leader for the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment.

He met the love of his life, Laura Somerville, of Nashville, Tennessee while he was stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

Captain Clayton Carpenter died on Wednesday, January 15, 2014, while flying his Blackhawk helicopter on a training mission near Hunter Army Airfield, Savannah, Georgia. He was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery on March 5, 2014.

Clayton Carpenter's awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal (w/1 Oak Leaf Cluster), Air Medal (w/Numeral 2), Army Commendation Medal (w/Valor Device), Meritorious Unit Citation (w/1 Oak Leaf Cluster), National Defense Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal (w/Bronze Service Star), Iraq Campaign Medal (w/3 Bronze Service Stars), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (w/Numeral 3), and NATO Medal. At the time of his death, Clayton Carpenter was a Captain. He was posthumously promoted by the Army to Major and awarded another Meritorious Service Medal.