



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Senator Young Honors New York Army National Guard Specialist Esteban Torres Jr.

CATHARINE YOUNG September 30, 2017

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OLEAN, New York -- In recognition of his outstanding service in the New York Army National Guard, Senator Catharine M. Young (R,C,I- Olean) presented Specialist Esteban Torres, Jr. with military medals from the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs. The ceremony took place in the Senator's Olean Office and was attended by family members of Specialist Torres.

“Specialist Torres’ unwavering dedication and devotion to duty exemplify the best of the New York Army National Guard. His extraordinary leadership while deployed to Sing Sing Correctional Facility in April 1979 was crucial in keeping staff and inmates secure in a potentially volatile situation,” said Senator Young. “Despite the difficulty of the mission, Specialist Torres’ command of his squad and untiring commitment during this tense period were exceptional.”

Esteban Torres Jr. was born on September 21, 1957 in Buffalo, New York to Esteban and Onelia Martinez Torres. He attended Burgard Vocational High School, leaving midway through 11th grade when his family relocated to New York City. He achieved a New York State High School Equivalency Diploma in 1981 and attended Erie Community College, majoring in recreation.

On March 31, 1976, Private Torres, then 19 years of age, enlisted in the New York Army National Guard and participated in 18 weeks of active duty for Basic Combat Training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Polk, Louisiana. He was assigned to Company A, First Battalion, 107th Infantry Regiment, 42nd Infantry Division.

In April 1979, then-Private First Class Torres was ordered to state active duty by Governor Hugh Carey and deployed to Sing Sing Correctional Facility in Ossining, New York to maintain stability. As a squad leader in charge of 12 men, Private Torres patrolled the prison’s south wing for four weeks, maintaining security over 50 maximum-security inmates. He was honorably discharged as a specialist fourth class on March 30, 1982, completing six years and three months of service.

In his civilian life, Mr. Torres continued to serve the residents of New York State through his work as a residential counselor for the New York State OMRDD facility in Queens, New York. He worked in a similar capacity for Catholic Charities for 10 years, retiring in 2011.

Married to the former Evelyn Rivera, the couple celebrated 25 years of marriage this year. They have three children: Steven, Jasami and Alicia, and seven grandchildren. The family relocated to Caneadea in Allegany County so Evelyn could continue her career as a social worker with Western New York Developmental Disabilities State Operations and Offices (WNYDDSO).

Specialist Torres said: “My service in the New York Army National Guard was an incredibly rewarding part of my life. It enabled me to serve my state and fellow New Yorkers in an important capacity and to participate in missions that advanced public safety. I am very grateful to Senator Young for this recognition and for her commitment to our veterans and our military.”

Recognizing his contributions, Senator Young presented Specialist Torres with the following medals: the New York State Military Commendation Medal, the New York Long and Faithful Service Medal and the U.S. Army Marksman Badge with Rifle Bar.