



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

Senator Larkin Hosts Local Purple Heart Recipients in Albany as part of Vietnam Veterans' Day

[WILLIAM LARKIN](#) March 29, 2018



Senator Bill Larkin (R,C,I - Cornwall-On-Hudson) invited three local Purple Heart recipients who were wounded in combat during the Vietnam War to Albany yesterday as part of the New York State Senate's recognition of National Vietnam Veterans' Day. Marine Corporal Richard Lay, Marine Lance Corporal Daniel Clarino and Army Sergeant Richard Drago all attended yesterday's ceremony, which included a luncheon, tour of the New York State Capitol and a special Resolution presentation on the floor of the State Senate.

More than 20 veterans participated from all corners of New York State as part of Senator Larkin and Senator Terrence Murphy's Third Annual Vietnam Veterans' Day in Albany.

“Honoring our Vietnam veterans and making sure they know their service is appreciated holds a very special place in my heart,” said Senator Larkin. “As a witness to the horrors of how our Vietnam veterans were treated by the general public upon their return from combat, I know how important it is for all of us to do our part now to show them how much their service means to us individually and as a country. I was moved to see both sides of the aisle join in yesterday’s ceremony, giving our veterans a standing ovation and the welcome home they rightfully deserved.”

“Being here in Albany and seeing how many people really appreciate what we did makes you get pretty emotional,” said Richard Drago, a Vietnam combat veteran and Purple Heart recipient. “War is constant on-the-job training and you have to learn to adapt, to adjust, every day, every hour, every minute. Being here with Senator Larkin and other leaders in our state government and having them thank us for our service is something I will never forget.”

Sergeant Richard Drago served in the United States Army during the War in Vietnam. He was wounded by a mortar not far from the Cambodian border. Upon being wounded, Sergeant Drago maintained his position and continued to fire his weapon in defense of his unit, Alpha Company, First Battalion, 7th Air Cavalry “Custer’s Unit”. Richard is a resident of the Town of Newburgh.

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