



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael H. Ranzenhofer

Cunningham Inducted Into Veterans' Hall of Fame

MICHAEL H. RANZENHOFER May 15, 2018

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Albany, NY– Col. Patrick J. Cunningham has been inducted into the New York State Senate Veterans' Hall of Fame. He was the driving force behind improvements to the visitor experience and boosting attendance at the Buffalo & Erie County Naval & Military Park.

Senator Michael H. Ranzenhofer nominated Cunningham, posthumously honoring him today at a State Capitol ceremony.

"Pat served in the U.S. Army for three decades, but his service to our nation continued throughout his entire lifetime. It is such a privilege to recognize him as one of the newest members of the Veterans' Hall of Fame," said Ranzenhofer.

Cunningham's distinguished military career encompassed serving in the Vietnam War, as well as several positions at the Pentagon, including overseeing the Army Budget, assignments at Ft. Bragg, Ft. Bliss, Ft. Leavenworth, and across the globe, from Korea to Worms, Germany and Orleans, France.

He retired as a Colonel from Ft. Benjamin Harrison, where he served in the post of Chief of Staff, in Indiana. In 1989, Pat and his wife, Sheila, moved back home to Buffalo to be closer to family. He started his second career as Executive Director at the Buffalo and Erie County Naval and Military Park.

Cunningham died in March 2017 from a respiratory illness due in part to his exposure to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. He is survived by 5 children and 14 grandchildren. Members of the Cunningham family traveled from as far as Indiana for the induction ceremony.

“My father dedicated his entire life to the service of his country and family, offering the best of himself, the gift of his example, the legacy of service and integrity,” said Cunningham’s daughter, Colleen Burns. “Thank you, Senator Ranzenhofer, for helping our family, and the entire Western New York community, remember his legacy.”

Cunningham graduated from Canisius College in 1959 with a degree in Sociology and a commission in the Army. He received his MBA from Syracuse University. He received numerous awards for his military service, including the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal and Army Commendation Medal.

In addition to being dedicated to his career, Cunningham was an active volunteer in the American Society of Military Comptrollers, Military Officers’ Association of America and Boy Scouts. He was also a proud referee for high school football and basketball games, as well as an umpire for little league baseball.

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