



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

Harckham Unveils Medal of Honor Global War on Terror Monument in Mount Pleasant

PETE HARCKHAM September 15, 2020

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New York State Senator Pete Harckham unveiled a new monument dedicated to the Medal of Honor recipients during the Global War on Terror on Saturday, Sept. 12 at a special ceremony here held at Town of Mount Pleasant Town Hall.

The monument, which includes a bronze sculpture of a soldier and a plaque with the names of the Medal of Honor recipients, was funded through a state grant that Harckham secured

for the Town of Mount Pleasant.

Harckham unveiled the monument with renowned television news journalist and author Rita Crosby, who served as the master of ceremonies for the event.

“I am proud to have ensured that this commemoration of a select group of courageous Armed Service members who have fought in the War on Terror became a reality in Mount Pleasant,” said Harckham. “This monument will be a reminder for generations to come of the heroism and selfless deeds these individuals demonstrated in order to protect the freedom of people everywhere.”

The Town of Mount Pleasant’s Town Board approved a resolution last year to make the municipality a Medal of Honor Town. The Medal of Honor is awarded to members of the Armed Services for valor in action against an enemy force. Only 3,500 service members have been awarded the Medal of Honor since President Lincoln first bestowed the decoration in 1863. In the Global War on Terror, 25 service members have been awarded the Medal of Honor, with nine of those having given the ultimate sacrifice and their medals awarded posthumously.

“The Town of Mount Pleasant actively participates in events that honor and support our veterans, and we are proud to have the War on Terror Monument displayed at Mount Pleasant Town Hall,” said Mount Pleasant Supervisor Carl Fulgenzi. “This monument is another way to publicly acknowledge the sacrifices made by our brave men and women throughout our country’s history.”

Mount Pleasant’s new Medal of Honor monument is thought to be the nation’s first commemoration dedicated to service members who have fought in the Global War on Terror, noted Peter Fiumefreddo, commander of American Legion Post 112 in Hawthorne and the

chairman of the New York State Medal of Honor Committee.

Several years ago, the Town of Mount Pleasant, American Legion Post 112 and the New York State Medal of Honor Committee established the state's first Medal of Honor monument, listing all New York recipients of the award at Mount Pleasant Town Hall. In addition to the monument outside at Town Hall, there is also a display in the lobby inside of the medals and photos of several of the New York's Medal of Honor recipients.

The new monument does not yet list the name of the most recent recipient of the Medal of Honor, David Bellavia, an Army Staff Sergeant from Buffalo, NY. Bellavia's name is set to be added shortly.

"We appreciate Senator Harckham's support for the Medal of Honor Global War on Terror Monument," said Fiumefreddo. "He has been active with our veterans' programs in Mount Pleasant and did not hesitate to do what was necessary to get the state grant for the monument."