



VETERANS

★★★ HALL OF FAME ★★★

NICHOLAS STEFANOVIC

Nicholas Stefanovic was inspired to join the United States Marine Corps after the attacks on 9/11.

Born and raised in Monroe County, Mr. Stefanovic briefly worked for Coca-Cola after graduating from Gates Chili High School in 2000. He joined the Marine Corps, dedicating four years to a combat MOS, and deployed multiple times to Afghanistan and beyond.

Returning in 2006, Mr. Stefanovic faced challenges transitioning to civilian life. Battling addiction to pain pills and heroin, he found himself homeless by 2009, alternating between hotel rooms and a homeless encampment under the Driving Park Bridge. Seeking help, he entered the Rochester Veterans Treatment Court on May 1, 2009, and credits Judge Patricia Marks and the program with saving his life.

Since then, Mr. Stefanovic has earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from SUNY Brockport. Starting as a substance abuse therapist, he later transitioned to public administration, working on inmate reintegration programs through contracts with the National Institute of Corrections and Bureau of Prisons.

In January 2018, Mr. Stefanovic was appointed as Director of the Monroe County Veterans Service Agency, continuing under current County Executive Adam Bello. Recognized for their work, Mr. Stefanovic and his team have received accolades from local offices and the President of the United States.

Mr. Stefanovic has garnered numerous awards, including being a "40 Under 40" recipient, Gates Chili Hall of Fame inductee, Kiwanis Veteran to Veteran awardee, Vietnam Veterans of America Service Officer of the Year awardee, and recipient of the John R. Schwartz Accountability Meets Compassion Award. He serves on various boards and committees, including Keeping Our Promise, aiding Afghan wartime allies, and is the former Chair of the War on Terror Memorial Committee.

This year, Mr. Stefanovic, under the County Executive leadership, pioneered the first county-funded nature-based therapy program for veterans nationwide. His current mission is to promote accessible alternative treatments for those grappling with trauma and mental health, advocating for a paradigm shift in clinical approaches.



NICHOLAS STEFANOVIC WAS SELECTED AS A
2024 VETERANS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE BY
SENATOR SAMRA G. BROUK.

2024