



VETERANS

★★★ HALL OF FAME ★★★

KAMAL NASSER

Kamal Nasser enlisted in the United States Army in 1986, first serving in the United States Army Reserve. He was a Private First Class Medical Specialist at his time of departure.

After completing his service, Mr. Nasser returned to Queens and became a small business owner as a street vendor in Jackson Heights, selling clothing imported from his native Bangladesh on 37th Avenue and 74th Street.

Since the 19th century, New York City's military veterans have held the unique privilege to acquire business licensing to become street vendors. This provides veterans with a way to create economic opportunity for themselves. For Mr. Nasser and many other veterans, street vending offers the freedom to start their own businesses, while continuing to be of service in the communities in which they work, as the eyes on the street.

Until 2014, New York City routinely denied vendor licenses for disabled veterans with mental disabilities resulting from their service, meaning that many veterans were excluded from an economic opportunity earned in the line of duty. The statute was written during a time when mental health issues, including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), in Mr. Nasser's case, were not commonly recognized.

Mr. Nasser became a strong advocate for veterans with the Street Vendor Project and Legal Services NYC, and in 2014 the law was changed, enabling veterans eligibility to obtain the license.

Thanks to Mr. Nasser's advocacy, veterans who suffer from the hidden scars of war are no longer being treated as any less deserving when it comes to pursuing their entrepreneurial spirit in New York City.

Mr. Nasser's current dream is to start a Muslim-American Veterans Association, and to continue to increase understanding of the Islamic religion in the United States.



KAMAL NASSER WAS SELECTED AS A 2021
VETERANS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE BY
SENATOR JESSICA RAMOS.

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