



# VETERANS

★★★ HALL OF FAME ★★★

## PETER GONG

Peter Gong served in the United States Army for 12 years and the United States Air Force for 16 years. He retired after 28 years at the rank of Master Sergeant.

Mr. Gong was drafted into the Army in 1965, and endured shelling, malaria, snakes, leeches, and casual racism while air-jumping into the rice paddies of Vietnam as an Infantryman. His honor and duty to country remained unwavering under 60 pounds on his back, as he dreamed of going airborne. Eventually, he would fly more than 25 helicopter combat missions.

He earned numerous recognitions for his service including 20 medals, M14 Rifle Marksmanship, and the Conspicuous Service Cross. Mr. Gong is a sought-after Color Guard leader, looked up to in local Chinese-American civic groups, and is a strong advocate in speaking out against hate crimes.

Once he returned from war, Mr. Gong remained active in the United States Army Reserve, becoming an E7 Platoon Sergeant First Class, but it was with the Air National Guard Rescue Unit out of Roslyn where he realized his dream of going airborne. As a Civil Engineer for plumbing, he traveled to the United Kingdom and later the tense Korean demilitarized zone.

Mr. Gong was born in Brooklyn to parents who emigrated from Canton, China through Ellis Island, along with five brothers and two sisters, who were taught to never forget their commitment to family and community.

Since retiring in 1997, Mr. Gong continues to work with trained volunteers as the Honor Guard at the funerals of fallen United States military service members. He has participated in 175 burials – through rain, snow, and heat, seeing to the proper presentation of the folded flag to the heartbroken, or standing graveside for those who have no one to attend.

Mr. Gong is the proud father of two children and is blessed to be a grandfather of three. Mr. Gong has donated an American flag that proudly flies outside of Senator Kaplan's District Office, a personal connection to patriotism.



PETER GONG WAS SELECTED AS A 2021  
VETERANS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE BY  
**SENATOR ANNA M. KAPLAN.**

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