



VETERANS

★★★ HALL OF FAME ★★★

JOHN O'CONNOR

John "Jack" O'Connor's love of country and a commitment to serving his community and his fellow veterans are the characteristics he is most associated with.

A veteran of the United States Army during the Vietnam War, he served his country with great pride and distinction during a very turbulent time in our nation's history. In the more than 40 years that has passed since the Vietnam War ended, he has applied that same dedication to serving his fellow veterans.

He served in the United States Army in Vietnam from 1968-1970, first with the 82nd Airborne Division and then with the 25th Infantry Division. His brave and selfless performance was recognized with many commendations, including the Bronze Star, the National Defense Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, an Army Commendation Medal, a Combat Infantryman Badge, and a Good Conduct Medal.

After being honorably discharged in 1970, he spent 30 years as the Director of Medicaid Reform in the Erie County Department of Social Services. It was during this time that he began following his calling to aid those who served our country, working with veterans, including many who had found themselves homeless, to connect them with a wide variety of services.

Mr. O'Connor's post-military career has been highlighted by the significant role he played in establishing the first Veterans Treatment Court in the nation in Buffalo, New York in 2008. The court aids veterans struggling with addiction and mental illness by diverting them from the traditional criminal justice system to programs and services to help them transition from active duty and rebuild their lives.

So successful was the court that it became a national model for the more than 350 Veterans Courts around the country that followed. More than a decade after its founding, Mr. O'Connor remains a highly active volunteer, serving as a mentor to the court and his fellow veterans. Today, the City of Buffalo Veterans Court stands as a shining legacy to the life and career of John "Jack" O'Connor, a most deserving recipient of the New York State Veterans Hall of Fame honor.



JOHN O'CONNOR WAS SELECTED AS
A 2020 VETERANS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE BY
SENATOR CHRISTOPHER L. JACOBS.

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