



NEW YORK STATE SENATE

20  19
VETERANS' HALL OF FAME

STEVEN T. BANKO III

Steven T. Banko III was drafted into the United States Army in 1967 to begin his service in Vietnam at the age of 21. He served in Vietnam from 1967 until December 1968, celebrating his 22nd birthday there and marking him the fifth oldest man in a rifle company of 150. Sergeant Banko was wounded while defending his rifle company, Delta Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, in a battle that, over the course of five and a half hours, resulted in an 86% casualty rate.

In late October 1969, he returned to serve his second tour of combat duty, leading a platoon of 40 men. At the end of January 1970, he received his final discharge order and returned home to Buffalo with a Silver Star, earned for combat valor; four Bronze Stars, two of which were awarded for heroism; and four Purple Hearts.

Since returning home, Sergeant Banko has tirelessly advocated on behalf of veterans in Western New York. He was responsible for hosting the Vietnam Veterans Moving Wall in Western New York twice, served as President of the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program from 1986-1996 and as Chairman of the Vietnam Veterans Luncheon from 1982-1986, and raised and distributed more than \$50,000 in college scholarships to children of Vietnam veterans.

Sergeant Banko has authored two books, more than two dozen essays in the *Buffalo News*, several dedications and poems featured on Western New York Memorials, and has been a featured speaker at cities throughout the United States.



**STEVEN T. BANKO III IS NAMED TO
THE NEW YORK STATE VETERANS' HALL OF FAME
BY SENATOR TIMOTHY M. KENNEDY**

