



Board of County Commissioners

County of Hunterdon
71 Main Street, Building #1
PO Box 2900
Flemington, NJ 08822-2900

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: November 15, 2023

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Hunterdon County Veterans Honored At Inspiring Ceremony On Veterans Day

The military service of forty Hunterdon County Veterans was heralded through the award of the Hunterdon County Veterans Recognition Medal, in front of a large and enthusiastic crowd of family and friends, during a Veterans Day ceremony in the Assembly Room at the County's Campus, Route 12 in Raritan Township.

While thanking the Veterans for their service, Hunterdon County Board of Commissioners Director Zach Rich told the Veterans, "American Freedom would not exist without your sacrifice."

Retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Shawn Phillips, a decorated combat Veteran of service in Iraq, a graduate of Hunterdon Central High School, and currently a senior U.S. Homeland Security Officer, traveled from Florida to serve as the event's guest speaker.

Phillips told the assemblage, "Those who have served know the military model helps to make us all a better version of ourselves. And we should use that knowledge to nurture the strengths of our nation and strengthen the weaknesses, in order to keep America the land of the free and home of the brave."

In introducing Colonel Phillips, State Senator Doug Steinhardt stated, "To say that Shawn Phillips has served and continues to serve this Nation with distinction is an understatement."

Ninety-six-year-old U.S. Navy Veteran William Landis of Lambertville, who joined the Navy at age 17 in 1944, was the first Veteran at the ceremony to receive his Recognition Medal, which was presented by County Surrogate Susan Hoffman, who is retiring after 46 years of service to the County.

The ceremony was livestreamed and recorded. It can be viewed here:

<https://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/547/Veterans-Recognition-Program>



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The Hunterdon County Veterans Recognition Medal was designed over twenty years ago by the late John Hatzikalifas, a county resident, and Vietnam Veteran.

State officials participating in the presentation of medals included Senator Steinhardt, Assembly Minority Leader John DiMaio and Assembly member Erik Peterson, all of whom represent Hunterdon County.

County officials who presented medals to the Veterans included Surrogate Hoffman, Sheriff Fred Brown, Prosecutor Renee Robeson, Commissioner Director Rich, Deputy Director Jeff Kuhl and Commissioners Shaun Van Doren and Susan Soloway.

Hunterdon County has awarded the Veterans Recognition Medal to over 4000 County Veterans over the years. Veterans interested in applying for the award should contact Hunterdon County Veterans Service Officer (VSO), U.S. Navy Veteran Rich Booth at rbooth@co.hunterdon.nj.us, or calling 908 788-1361. The application is also available online at: <https://www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/548/How-to-Apply-for-a-Medal>

Earlier in the day, at 11 am on Veterans Day (the 11th hour, on the 11th day of the 11th month), the Hunterdon County Historic Courthouse bell tolled 21 times to honor Veterans, as it has every year on Veterans Day since 2018, which was the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I.



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Veteran's Recognition Medal Ceremony