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Eighteen Florida Veterans to be Inducted into *In Memory* Program in 2021

Ceremony in Washington, D.C. honors Vietnam Veterans who died after returning home

Washington, D.C. – Nearly 400 Vietnam veterans, including eighteen from Florida, will be inducted into the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund's (VVMF) *In Memory* Program in 2021. The program honors Vietnam veterans whose lives were cut short as a result of their service after they returned home from Vietnam.

On October 16, 2021, VVMF will host the 2021 *In Memory* ceremony on the East Knoll of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, where each 2021 honoree's name will be read aloud. This year, 361 service members will be honored during the ceremony.

"For many Vietnam veterans, coming home from Vietnam was just the beginning of a whole new fight. Many never fully recovered, either physically or emotionally, from their experiences. As these veterans pass, it is our duty and solemn promise to welcome them home to the place that our nation has set aside to remember our Vietnam veterans," said Jim Knotts, president and CEO of VVMF.

The plaque that honors these veterans was dedicated as a part of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial site in 2004. It reads: *In Memory of the men and women who served in the Vietnam War and later died as a result of their service. We honor and remember their sacrifice.*

2021 In Memory Inductees from Florida:

[Thomas Edward Beck, U.S. Navy](#)

Santa Rosa Beach, Fla.

April 29, 1946 – December 13, 2019

[Harold Claton Blankenship, U.S. Army](#)

Deerfield Beach, Fla.

July 7, 1950 – January 8, 2011

[Stanley Cidlowski Jr., U.S. Army](#)

St. Petersburg, Fla.

September 19, 1941 – November 3, 2019

[Philip Thomas Eldon, U.S. Army](#)

Venus, Fla.

June 10, 1947 – March 16, 2018

Jaime E. Escabi, U.S. Army

Valrico, Fla.

June 29, 1949 – August 30, 2019

Stan Ferguson, U.S. Navy

Cantonment, Fla.

November 9, 1947 – December 3, 2019

Frank A. Filosa, U.S. Army

Venice, Fla.

April 23, 1946 – November 8, 2019

Jerry Lee Floyd, U.S. Army

Jacksonville, Fla.

November 20, 1942 – December 5, 2018

Dominic Joseph Gabriele, U.S. Marine Corps

Margate, Fla.

September 23, 1943 – March 12, 2017

Barry Allan Gallas, U.S. Army

Jacksonville, Fla.

June 11, 1942 – March 8, 2020

Samuel Hines III, U.S. Army

Jacksonville, Fla.

July 27, 1949 – May 12, 2015

Mark Douglas Hutchinson, U.S. Army

Port Orange, Fla.

March 12, 1949 – September 24, 2013

Richard Lee Johnson, U.S. Air Force

Lakeland, Fla.

August 31, 1944 – April 23, 2020

Gordon B. Porterfield III, U.S. Army

Brooksville, Fla.

December 27, 1943 – March 18, 2020

Elmer A. Strickland, U.S. Army

Alachua, Fla.

February 24, 1948 – May 17, 2011

Fred Svarney, U.S. Army

Parkland, Fla.

September 8, 1947 – April 11, 2020

John J. Valente Jr., U.S. Army

Venice, Fla.

April 22, 1948 – July 14, 2018

Jose R. Velez Morillo, U.S. Army

Punta Gorda, Fla.

March 5, 1948 – February 17, 2021

VVMF has created a personal remembrance page for each honoree online in the *In Memory* Honor Roll at www.vvmf.org/honor-roll. Their photos will also be displayed around the country when VVMF's mobile exhibit, *The Wall That Heals*, is on display in an honoree's home state.

The 2021 *In Memory* ceremony will be shown live on VVMF's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/VietnamVeteransMemorialFund>) beginning at 10 a.m. ET on October 16, 2021. The *In Memory* program was created in 1993 and has since honored more than 5,100 veterans. For more information on the *In Memory* program or to apply to have your loved one honored in 2022, please visit: www.vvmf.org/inmemory.

About the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) is the nonprofit organization that founded the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (The Wall) in Washington, D.C. in 1982. VVMF continues to lead the way in paying tribute to our nation's Vietnam veterans and their families. VVMF's mission is to honor and preserve the legacy of service in America and educate all generations about the impact of the Vietnam War and era. To learn more about VVMF, visit www.vvmf.org or call 202-393-0090.

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