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Nineteen Michigan 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 nineteen from Michigan, 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 Michigan:

[John Allen Balkon, U.S. Army](#)

Grandville, Mich.

September 13, 1948 – June 4, 2018

[Bryan Edward Bokuniewicz, U.S. Marine Corps](#)

Lincoln Park, Mich.

September 18, 1946 – June 16, 1974

[Ronald Lee Brown, U.S. Marine Corps](#)

Grand Rapids, Mich.

December 11, 1944 – December 20, 2020

[Neil A. Burke, U.S. Army](#)

Coldwater, Mich.

May 7, 1944 – January 8, 2021

Floyd Edward Burns Sr., U.S. Army

Bay City, Mich.

March 9, 1950 – September 4, 2019

Obie Alexander Franklin Jr., U.S. Army

Detroit, Mich.

February 21, 1945 – October 29, 2020

Duane Eugene Garoutte, U.S. Army

Mount Vernon, Mich.

August 29, 1947 – March 19, 2016

John Norman Gross Jr., U.S. Marine Corps

Lexington, Mich.

July 12, 1949 – September 13, 2017

Keith Taylor Hearsch, U.S. Army

Davison, Mich.

July 2, 1947 – December 10, 2020

James David Kesselring, U.S. Army

Milford, Mich.

December 29, 1948 – December 31, 2020

Lawrence Leland Larsen, U.S. Marine Corps

Hartford, Mich.

August 27, 1946 – November 24, 2015

Frank George Machovsky, U.S. Air Force

Rothbury, Mich.

March 22, 1947 – October 26, 2018

Victor Pena Nacienceno, U.S. Army

Pontiac, Mich.

December 23, 1952 – March 5, 2014

Jerry Martin O'Neal, U.S. Army

Deepwater, Mich.

September 16, 1951 – July 5, 2019

John William Owings III, U.S. Marine Corps

Detroit, Mich.

May 9, 1946 – July 22, 2017

Gordon Polut, U.S. Army

St. Clair Shores, Mich.

January 29, 1948 – January 13, 2021

Richard Witold Porada, U.S. Army

Detroit, Mich.

November 27, 1952 – January 19, 2011

Richard C. Vigus, U.S. Marine Corps

Warren, Mich.

October 27, 1950 – January 17, 2019

John Allan Williams, U.S. Navy

Westland, Mich.

December 5, 1946 – December 20, 1993

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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