



1999 - 2024

2024

OKLAHOMA MILITARY HALL OF FAME

25TH ANNUAL BANQUET & INDUCTION CEREMONY

26 OCTOBER 2024

EMBASSY SUITES NORMAN
2501 CONFERENCE DRIVE
NORMAN, OKLAHOMA

REGISTRATION STARTS 5 PM
RECEPTION/CASH BAR 5:30 PM
SEATING BEGINS 6 PM
WELCOME 6:30 PM

DRESS CODE:

Black tie or business suit for men, "after 5" wear for ladies, Sunday best, service dress, mess dress or business suit for military personnel.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

OKLAHOMA MILITARY HERITAGE FOUNDATION

P. O. Box 30658
Edmond, OK 73003

405-424-5313
info@okmhf.org

OKMHF.ORG

ENTERTAINMENT BY



MAGGIE BOND & DENNIS HOCH



CELEBRATING

25 YEARS

LIVESTREAM - ALTERNATE ATTENDANCE OPTION

A livestream of the evening will be available for \$35. See OKMHF.org website for link to sign up and payment. Professionally prepared DVDs with interviews of living inductees will be available approximately four months after the event for \$25 each, plus shipping. We will also have an 84-page hardback Memory Book of photos from the event for \$60, plus shipping.



25TH ANNUAL BANQUET & INDUCTION CEREMONY

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Our Missions: Honoring the men and women of Oklahoma who served in the Uniformed Services of the United States, demonstrating extraordinary acts of courage, heroism or gallantry, and who continue to serve our country and communities today, as well as educating the public, especially the State's youth, about military service to our Nation.

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT

MSG EARL D. PLUMLEE U.S. ARMY

Master Sergeant Earl D. Plumlee, US Army, was born in 1980 in Clinton, Oklahoma, growing up on a farm in Merritt, near Elk City. Plumlee joined the Oklahoma National Guard in 1998. He joined the Marines in 2000 serving as a Force Reconnaissance Marine with a tour in Iraq. In 2009 he inter-service transferred to the Army, qualifying as a Special Forces soldier. For actions in Afghanistan on 28 August 2013, Plumlee was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry, and in 2021 that award was upgraded to the Medal of Honor. MSG Plumlee retired in 2023.

1LT JOE VAN ABERNATHY U.S. ARMY

1st Lieutenant Joe Van Abernathy, US Army, was born in 1946 in Clinton, Oklahoma, and raised in Sweetwater. He was an athlete and student leader, graduating from Sweetwater High School in 1964. In 1966 Abernathy enlisted in the US Army, graduated from Officer Candidate School, commissioned as an Infantry Lieutenant, and completed Airborne and Ranger School. During 1968 and 1969, Abernathy served in South Vietnam with the 1st/61st Infantry as a platoon leader. For his selflessness, outstanding leadership, courage, and valorous actions during two desperate battles, he was awarded both the Distinguished Service Cross and the Silver Star.

LTCOL KENNETH A. BROWER U.S. AIR FORCE, 1919 - 2016

Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth A. Brower, US Air Force, was born in 1919 in Greenfield, Oklahoma. He enlisted in the Oklahoma Guard in 1938. In 1941 he was accepted into the Army Air Corps, trained as a navigator, and in 1943 was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant. As a navigator on the Martin B-26 Marauder medium bomber, Brower completed 46 combat missions. On his last mission, 8 July 1944, his aircraft was shot down near Amiens, France, and for the next three months French citizens helped him evade the enemy. LtCol Brower returned home in October 1945. His awards include the Distinguished Flying Cross and Purple Heart.

SGT PATRICK KEITH BRYAN U.S. ARMY, 1949 - 2017

Sergeant Patrick Keith Bryan, US Army, was born in Pittsburg, Kansas, in 1949. He graduated from Daniel Webster High School in 1967. In March 1969 Bryan was drafted, and in July the newly trained 11B infantryman arrived in Vietnam assigned to B Company, 4th/23rd Infantry, 25th Infantry Division. In November 1969 he would earn his first Purple Heart and the Bronze Star Medal. For combat action on 9 January 1970, he was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry. On his return to Oklahoma, he became a Letter Carrier with the US Postal Service and the driver of their charitable programs for less fortunate Oklahomans.



LTC ROBERT FRANK CRESON U.S. ARMY, 1927 - 2014

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Frank Creson, US Army, was born in Fayetteville, Tennessee, in 1927, graduating from high school in 1945. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps in July, near the end of World War II, but after basic training he was selected for the first post-war OCS class. At age 19 he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Infantry. During the Korean War he volunteered for Ranger training, and on 28 May 1951, as XO with Company L, 187th Airborne Infantry Regiment, he single-handedly attacked and destroyed an enemy machinegun emplacement for which he was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry.

1LT TOM EMERSON U.S. ARMY, 1944 - 1969

1st Lieutenant Tom Emerson, US Army, born in Missouri in 1944, moved to Oklahoma when he was ten. Known as a dependable, intelligent, and outgoing student, his German teacher, retired Col Virgil Caldwell, influenced his interest in the Army. Emerson graduated from Northwest Classen High School in 1962, attended The University of Oklahoma, and in 1963 was accepted to the United States Military Academy, graduating in 1967. In 1969, after Ranger School and Officer Basic, he joined 3rd/5th Cavalry in Vietnam. On 24 March 1969, Emerson displayed extraordinary heroism as he led his platoon against a determined enemy. He was awarded the Silver Star (posthumously) for his gallantry.

MAJGEN WILLIAM P.T. HILL U.S. MARINE CORPS, 1895 - 1965

Major General William P.T. Hill, US Marine Corps, was born in 1895, raised in Vineta, Indian Territory/Oklahoma, and is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. Seeming destined for a military career, he attended two military schools. In 1917 he graduated from the University of Oklahoma with a degree in geology. In World War I Hill was one of the first USMC Naval Aviators. In the 1920s and 1930s his geology expertise was employed in Alaska and China. Assigned to the Marine Quartermaster Department in 1929, he would later be pivotal in establishing Camp LeJeune. In February 1944 Hill became the USMC Quartermaster General, a post he held until 1955.

1LT DAN ELKINS JONES U.S. ARMY, 1947 - 2023

1st Lieutenant Dan Elkins Jones, US Army, was born in California in 1947 and raised in Oklahoma City. He was an example of intelligence, athleticism, leadership, and in 1965 graduated from Putnam City High School. In August 1968 he was commissioned as a Field Artillery 2nd Lieutenant. In Vietnam he served as an advisor to Vietnamese units. From March through June in 1969 he displayed gallantry and leadership in combat, being awarded the Silver Star, Bronze Star with Valor, and Air Medal with Valor. Jones' future PTSD counseling career was influenced by his military experience.

ADM MARC A. MITSCHER U.S. NAVY, 1887 - 1947

Admiral Marc A. Mitscher, US Navy, was born in Wisconsin in 1887 and in 1889 arrived with his parents in Oklahoma Territory in time for the Land Run. His father was the fifth Mayor of Oklahoma City (1892-1894). Young Mitscher loved the excitement of growing up in Oklahoma Territory for half the year, as he attended preparatory school in Washington, DC. Mitscher received an appointment to the US Naval Academy, graduating in 1910. In June 1916 Mitscher qualified as one of the first Naval Aviators (#33) and was a principal developer of the Fast Carrier Task Force successfully used in the Pacific victories of WWII.

CPT FREDERICK P. SMITH U.S. ARMY, 1946 - 1971

Captain Frederick P. Smith, US Army, was born in 1946 in Oklahoma City. He graduated from Northeastern High School in 1964, planning on becoming a physician; however, the draft intervened. He enlisted in 1965, became an artilleryman, was selected for Officer Candidate School, and commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant Chemical Corps with an EOD specialty. In March 1970 he arrived in Vietnam assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division. On 13 February 1971 Smith was on a helicopter "People Sniffer" mission. Upon the premature detonation of CS cluster munitions, Smith's heroic action saved the lives of the passengers except his own. He was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action. He earned 15 separate military decorations, with multiple awards of four of them. His decorations include the Navy Cross, the highest Navy decoration, and the second highest in the military.

MAJOR GENERAL DOUGLAS O. DOLLAR DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

SGM LANNY G. ASEPERMY U.S. ARMY

Sergeant Major Lanny G. Asepermy, US Army, was born in 1946 and raised west of Apache, Oklahoma, by his grandparents. His grandfather was a full-blood Comanche Indian and his grandmother a full-blood Kiowa Indian. He served in the US Army from 1966-1990, including a combat tour, 1969-1970 in Vietnam, earning the Combat Infantry Badge. After his retirement, Asepermy dedicated his life to the military, veterans, his American Indian heritage, and family. One can count over 5,000 instances when he impacted the remembrance of his Tribal veterans. SGM Asepermy truly exhibits the Spirit of a Warrior and Heart of a Patriot.

MS. ELAINE D. JOHNS

Ms. Elaine D. Johns was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1957, adopted by an American family, and at age 5 moved to the States. She graduated from Hennessy High School in 1975 and soon after married and became a naturalized American citizen. With their three children, community involvement became second nature leading to 12 years on the school board. In 1990, Johns worked at Enid Airport's Northwest Aero Services, a company she eventually purchased. In 1999 the Woodring Military Wall of Honor and Veterans Park was conceived, an 80% replica of the Vietnam Memorial Wall, now recognized as Oklahoma's official Vietnam War Memorial.

GROUP U.S. ARMY WWII RANGERS

The World War II Rangers - In January 1942, the first American units began moving to Northern Ireland. In May 1942, Army Chief of Staff General George Marshall sent Oklahoman, BG Lucian Truscott, to investigate ways to get combat experience for American soldiers. The War Department approved his proposal for a special unit of 473 all-volunteer soldiers. Truscott chose the historically cherished name "Rangers." Major William Darby from Arkansas was its first commander. During WWII, 7,000 volunteered in seven Battalions to be Rangers, including 71 Oklahomans. The Congressional Gold Medal was awarded in 2022, honoring their courage and motto: "Rangers Led the Way!"