



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

MICHAEL L. BARONI

Thank You to Our Veterans



Find more photos on page 56 or online at www.ocbar.org.

Pictured: Gray carrying his adopted son Ky, in Danang, Vietnam at Sacred Heart Orphanage.

On October 3, 1789 President George Washington's Thanksgiving Proclamation designated November 26th as a national day of thanks. Washington wanted the nation to be forever thankful for surviving our war against tyranny, and to collectively pray for our "protection" going forward.

Washington knew the life-and-death importance of a powerful military to maintain a free nation. From the Barbary Wars through the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the men and women of our military risk their lives for all of us to live in a free and sovereign nation. This President's Page is devoted to those in the Orange County legal community who have served in the U.S. military forces. We thank our heroes!

1. John A. Bergen: Captain and Judge Advocate General (JAG), with Force Logistics Command in the Marine Corps. Stationed in Danang during Vietnam War. Bergen is the recipient of the OCBA's 2017 Scoville Award.

2. Justice Eileen C. Moore: Lt., U.S. Army Nurse Corps. Combat nurse, 85th Evacuation Hospital in Quinhon, South Vietnam. When her Huey helicopter took "pings" of gunfire, crewmen covered Moore in bulletproof vests. "No nurse is getting hurt on my watch," said the pilot. Moore says, "Sometimes at night I was so scared I cried myself to sleep. But I was always aware that our boys were out there. Hate war, but love our warriors."

3. Hon. James P. Gray (Ret.): Navy JAG. Stationed at the U.S. Naval Air Station in Guam. Awarded National Defense, Vietnam Service, and Combat Action ribbons.

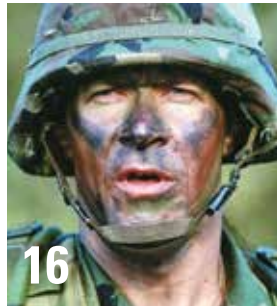
4. Star Q. Lopez: U.S. Air Force. Served in Operation Enduring Freedom, with Global Strike Command. Lopez received the Joint Service Commendation Medal. She is Vice-Chair of the OCBA's International Law section.

5. Thomas J. Umberg: Colonel, U.S. Army. Served in Afghanistan (as crime prosecutor and Chief of Anti Corruption), as a paratrooper with the Army's Special Operations Command, and with the 2nd Infantry Division on the Korean DMZ and in Europe. Received the Bronze Star Award.

6. Hon. Bruce W. Sumner (Ret.): Lt. Colonel, Marine Corps. Saw action in World War II and Korea. Received six Battle Stars, three Presidential Unit Citations, and a Letter of Commendation with the Combat Letter "V" (for assisting and evacuating wounded during two waves of attack). Sumner is former Presiding Justice at Orange County Superior Court.

7. Hon. Richard M. King: U.S. Navy, Seabees (mobile construction unit) for two tours in Vietnam. Received Navy Achievement Medal with Combat Letter "V" (for assisting and evacuating wounded during two waves of attack). King is a judge at the Orange County Superior Court.

8. Peter W. Pierce: U.S. Army, Human Terrain Leader. Deployed



to Iraq and Kuwait. In Sadr City, Iraq, a gas station exploded during battle, injuring a seven-year-old girl. Pierce got her to Doctors Without Borders for plastic surgery and treatment.

9. James J. Maune: Commander, Navy. Helicopter pilot, deployed aboard frigates, cruisers, and destroyers.

10. Alexis P. Federico: Lieutenant, Marine Corps. UH-1 Helicopter pilot and instructor with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 367 and with Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron One, where she was the first female instructor pilot. Several combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. Awarded Marine Aircraft Group 40 (Afghanistan) Aviator of the Year and Order of the Daedalians United States Marine Corps' Exceptional Pilot Award.

11. Hon. David T. McEachen (Ret.): U.S. Navy. Established Orange County's first drug court.

12. Tony J. Rackaukas, Jr.: Army Paratrooper, 101st Airborne Division. Rackaukas is Orange County District Attorney.

13. James S. Mendelson: Navy and Marine Corps fighter pilot, flying the F-4 Phantom and F/A-18 Hornet aircraft. Served in Cold War operations and in Mogadishu, Somalia during Operation Restore Hope. Mendelson is Senior Deputy District Attorney.

14. Andrew R. Nelson: Army, 82nd Airborne (parachute assault operations).

15. Hon. Robert C. Gannon, Jr.: Navy pilot, who flew 150 combat missions in UH-1 and SH-3 helicopters. Two tours in Vietnam: one at a base in Mekong Delta, the other on an aircraft carrier.

16. Dwight Stirling: Co-Founder, Veterans Legal Institute. Major, JAG Officer. Joined the Army National Guard shortly after the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Served in the Balkans with the Kosovo Force, a NATO-led peacekeeping force, where he served as Chief of Military Justice. Awards include a Meritorious Service Medal and an Army Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters.

17. Frank F. Bittar: While not a veteran because he is still in active service, I'd like to honor him here. 1st Lieutenant, California Army National Guard. A Deputy Public Defender, Frank is currently deployed in Afghanistan as a Law Judge Advocate.

Many more brave individuals in our legal community deserve recognition, and this is by no means a complete list. While space does not permit recognizing each of you by name, please know that your contribution to our country is greatly appreciated.

George Washington wrote on July 2, 1776: "The time is now at hand which must probably determine whether Americans are to be free men . . . The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage and conduct of this army." Indeed, America is the "home of the free, *because* of the brave."



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