



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

LARISA M. DINSMOOR

Honoring Our Veterans

This month we celebrate Veterans Day. As such, I reached out to judicial officers who are veterans and currently on the bench to hear about their experiences and what Veterans Day means to them. According to Orange County court staff, approximately thirty-four judges have served in the military. May we have more connection, community, and unity with the Bench and with those who have served our country.

"To me, being a veteran is my personal validation that I support and love my country." - Justice Eileen Moore

Justice Eileen Moore, Associate Justice for the Fourth District Court of Appeal (Division Three), served in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in Vietnam. She recommends honoring Veterans Day by staying connected with the military and military issues:

When I was a young girl in Philadelphia, soldiers and sailors were a familiar sight, but as we evolved from a draft into a purely volunteer military, the civilian population is less and less familiar with those who did serve or who presently serve. California has 10% of the veteran population living here. Those vets are jurors, clients, lawyers, court and law firm personnel. It is easy to go on with our lives without ever thinking about veterans, but many have legal issues and they need help.

Justice Moore reminds us that "anyone in the courtroom (can) be carrying some invisible wound of war." She says "It's not enough to just say 'thanks for your service,' and then forget about veterans . . . California has 34 Veterans Treatment Courts scattered throughout the state. One big problem they all share is the difficulty in getting volunteers to mentor court participants." Justice Moore encourages us to get involved and volunteer.

"To honor the warrior who was prepared to die in battle is to preserve the Rule of Law." - Judge Richard (Rick) King

Judge Richard (Rick) King enlisted in the Navy Seabees in 1965. He served four years, including two tours on the ground in Vietnam. During one of his tours, his camp came under heavy attack, and several of his friends were killed. Judge King reflects, "There is not a day that goes by that I do not think of them, and [reflect] that I have had over fifty years of life that they did not." To Judge King, being a veteran means "becoming a responsible adult who honorably served our country." He emphasizes that "our country has a duty to all veterans because of their service." He references President Lincoln's second inaugural address at the close of the Civil War, during which Lincoln encouraged people: "to care for him [veterans] who shall have borne the battle . . ."

"It is a difficult feeling to convey to others on why a veteran still gets a lump in the throat hearing the National Anthem played at a ballgame. A jingoistic hymn to some, yet to me, it is representative of America's greatness and leadership in the world." - Judge Andre De La Cruz

Judge Andre De La Cruz served in the Navy. He enlisted at seventeen years old to follow in the footsteps of his older brother, who served twenty years in the Marine Corps. He was on the U.S.S. Abraham Lincoln in California when he was deployed to the Western Pacific. Judge De La Cruz offers: "I would not be the person I am today were it not for my military experience. Through its many challenges, we all grew in our respective abilities—mental, physical, and academic—and it was exponentially transformative. We really don't know what we are capable of until we are pushed outside of our individual comfort zones." To honor Veterans Day, to Judge De La Cruz, a "simple thank you and acknowledgement suffices."

"I saw serving my country as an honor, but also as a modest duty." - Judge Derek Hunt

Judge Hunt was a first Lieutenant Officer in the Army. He spent one year in Germany and one year in Vietnam, the latter for which he volunteered. In the Army, Judge Hunt learned "how to get a job done on time, how to take pride in my work, and how to help others take pride in their work."

"[Being a Marine] means pride, honor, loyalty, a strong sense of accomplishment and so much more." - Judge Steven Bromberg

Judge Bromberg served in the Marine Corps at Camp Pendleton. He explains the significance of being a marine: "being selfless to preserve the freedom of others; placing the needs of others before themselves; exhibiting strength and courage in the face of adversity and austere conditions; becoming proven decision makers and problem solvers; (and) nurturing during times of need." Judge Bromberg reminds us that Veterans Day should not be taken for granted. "When most men and women enter military service, they are in their teens and a few, like me, were twenty-something. These folks are willing to fight for our country and, if necessary, make the ultimate sacrifice. All the branches of our military have been protecting and defending our country 24/7 for generations."

"We were proud to serve our country." - Judge David Carter

Judge Carter was a Marine Corp Lieutenant in the Vietnam war. He was injured in combat, spent ten months in military hospitals, and returned to active duty. His battalion was referred to as the "Walking Dead" because of its high casualties. To Judge Carter, being a veteran means "compassion and kindness, even under the worst circumstances, are always possible. There is nothing more sacred than human life."

Thank you to everyone who has served our country. For more information on veterans, visit the OCBA Veterans and Military Committee (VETCOM) online at <http://veterans.ocbar.org/>.

Larisa M. Dinsmoor is 2021 OCBA President and an Orange County Public Defender. She would love to hear from you at larisa@ocbar.org.

ORANGE COUNTY JUDICIAL OFFICERS WHO ARE VETERANS

JUDICIAL OFFICER	BRANCH SERVED
Andre De La Cruz	U.S. Navy
Steven Bromberg	U.S. Marines
Nicholas Thompson	U.S. Army
Comm. William G. Watson	U.S. Army
Michael Beecher, Retired	U.S. Army
Richard Stanford, Retired	U.S. Air Force
Thomas Thrasher, Retired	U.S. Navy
Richard Behn, Retired	U.S. Army
Thierry P. Colaw, Retired	U.S. Navy
Comm. Matthew Flynn, Retired	U.S. Marines
H. Warren Siegel, Retired	U.S. Marines
Comm James Odriozola, Retired	U.S. Marines
Gregory H. Lewis	U.S. Army
James Selna	U.S. Army
Richard Frazee, Retired	U.S. Army
Comm. Edward Hall	U.S. Marines
Stephanie George	U.S. Navy
Francisco P. Briseno, Retired	U.S. Marines
James Gray, Retired	U.S. Navy
John Trotter, Retired	U.S. Army
James Waltz	U.S. Army
Frank F. Fasel, Retired	U.S. Marines
Eileen Moore	U.S. Army
William Evans, Retired	U.S. Navy
Frederick P. Horn, Retired	U.S. Army
James DiCesare	U.S. Army
Rick King	U.S. Navy
Robert J. Moss	U.S. Army
Derek Hunt	U.S. Army
David Carter	U.S. Marines
John D. Conley	U.S. Marines, U.S. Army
Robert Gannon, Retired	U.S. Navy
Ronald Kreber, Retired	U.S. Marines
David T. McEachen, Retired	U.S. Navy

Thank you to Catalina Roger (OC Superior Court Community Outreach Coordinator) who compiled this list after reaching out to the Orange County judges.