

PRESS RELEASE
November 21, 2017

**ESSEX COUNTY FREEHOLDERS CELEBRATE
VETERANS DAY**



Pictured are (from left to right, front row) Freeholder Wayne L. Richardson, Marcella C. Odom-Thomas standing in for Howard Peele, Amanda Kutcha, Luis Felix, Freeholder At-Large Leby C. Jones, (from left to right, back row), Richard Silver, Freeholder President Britnee N. Timberlake, Freeholder At-Large Patricia Sebold, and Freeholder Cynthia D. during the Board's 2017 Veterans Celebration. Photo by GLEN FRIESON

(Newark, NJ) – The Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders held its 2017 Veterans Celebration on Thursday, November 9, 2017, at the Hall of Records to recognize the patriotism and sacrifice of men and women who have served our country. The veterans were presented with framed Commendations, plaques, and service medals. In addition, each honoree received citations from Senator M. Teresa Ruiz of the 29th Legislative District.

Freeholder President Britnee N. Timberlake began the program with welcoming remarks, celebrating each of the Board's honorees for their brave and selfless service. This year's honorees included: **Irving Roseman** of the U.S. Army; **Honorable Vernal Cox** of the U.S. Navy; **Richard Silver** of the U.S. Air Force; **Luis Felix** of the U.S. Navy; **Amanda Kuchta** of the U.S. Marines; and **Howard Peele** of the U.S. Army.

Irving Roseman of South Orange is a 92-year-old World War II veteran. He was drafted in the United States Army and became an Air Corp Pilot trained in gunnery. He was placed on a flight crew going to the Mariana Islands on a brand new B-29. He and the members of his crew flew from Kearney, Nebraska, to Mather Field Air Base in California. They flew from John Rodgers Field in

Honolulu, Hawaii, to Kwajalein Island, and to Saipan Island. As a Tail Gunner, he completed 27 missions, and he received a Distinguished Flying Cross Citation for his service.

Honorable Vernal Cox of Irvington served in the United States Navy from 1968 to 1969 as a Quartermaster Seaman where he was assigned to Com Sub RON III. His base was Base Point Loma, San Diego, California, and his vessel was U.S.S. Halibut (SSGN-587), a Nuclear Powered Guided Missile Submarine. In 1974, he started his professional career in law enforcement as a Corrections Officer at Rahway State Prison. Since then, he has served as Executive Vice President and, subsequently, President of the union representing all Parole Officers in New Jersey. After 25 years, he began a career as a Social Studies teacher at Irvington High School and went on to become Commissioner of the Irvington Housing Authority. He currently serves as an Irvington Councilmember, West Ward Democratic Chairman, District Leader, and 1st Vice President of the Irvington Education Association.

Richard Silver of Irvington was a member of the Willingboro High School Air Force Junior ROTC Program and served in the United States Air Force Reserve from 1990 to 2017 as a Non-Commissioned Officer in charge of the Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Department. After the September 11th terrorist attacks, he was deployed to Seeb, Oman, to support Operation Enduring Freedom and later supported Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom stationed in Dubai, UAE. He retired as a Tech Sergeant/E6 after 27 years of service and has received the following awards: Air Force Achievement Medal, Air Force Reserve Meritorious Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War Expeditionary on Terrorism Medal, and Global War on Terrorism Service Medal. In 2009, New Jersey Governor Jon Corzine presented him with a Community Service Award for his tireless efforts and dedication to the community.

Luis Felix of Bloomfield joined the Delayed Entrance Program in the United States Navy, and in April 1977, he was sent to Basic Training in Great Lakes, Chicago. He attended A-School in Lakehurst, New Jersey, and was assigned to Aircraft Carrier CVN 69 Dwight D. Eisenhower. He served as a plank owner, deploying to the Indian Ocean during the Iran Crisis. During his tenure, he also managed the launching and recovery of aircrafts. After his service, he was Honorably Discharged and went on to join the Navy Reserve for an additional 2 ½ years, training in Norfolk, Virginia. After being Honorably Discharged, he went on to work with special needs children as an Educational Associate for the New York City Board of Education for 25 years. Additionally, he currently serves as District 5 Freeholder Cynthia D. Toro's aide.

Amanda Kuchta of Bloomfield enlisted in the United States Marines in October 2007, a position she currently holds, and in 2011, she served in the Operation Enduring Freedom Campaign in Afghanistan. In October 2015, she enrolled in the Police Academy where she served as an EMT. More recently, she was recognized by the Board for her service as an Essex County Sheriff Officer during their Public Safety Professional Celebration. In May 2017, she received the Life Saving Award from the Essex County Sheriff's Office and the United States Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal in 2010. She was further recognized for her life-saving actions when a ricochet bullet struck a Marine, piercing her comrade's boot and injuring him. In response, she quickly called for assistance and rushed him to the hospital.

Howard Peele of East Windsor, New Jersey, graduated from high school in May 1972, and on May 31, 1972, he joined the United States Army. He was stationed in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he remained for 5 years. He went on to complete a two-year tour in Germany and was sent to Fort Dix where he became a Drill Sergeant. He was also stationed in Korea during the Persia Gulf War and West Point, New York. He retired in November 1992, and in September 1993, he was hired as a JROTC Instructor at Malcolm X. Shabazz High School in Newark.

The celebration was an uplifting event that featured songs from vocalist Carmen Jon and a catered reception for the honorees and their guests followed the program.

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