

2023 GMVHOF INDUCTEES



Luther Elwood Bagley (VALOR) (Killed-in-Action / Missing-in-Action)

In 1942 during World War II, "Buck" Bagley from Fitzgerald, GA enlisted in the Army and was trained as a Medic and Rifleman. In 1944, Private First Class Bagley deployed to the China-Burma-India Theater and was a combat replacement assigned to the famed and legendary Merrill's Marauders. In the spring and summer of 1944, while engaged in intense battle and despite taking heavy casualties, the Marauders overcame an elite Japanese division and captured the town of Myitkyna and its airfield, which was desperately needed to sustain the fight and for follow-on Allied forces. During the fighting, Buck went missing-in-action and even after multiple search and rescue efforts, his remains were never recovered. On 25 July 1944, PFC Bagley was declared as killed-in-action. In 2019, Buck's numerous awards were presented to his son, Woody, which included The Presidential Unit Citation, Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart.



Carl Hamilton Bell, III (VALOR)

Army Colonel (Ret) Carl Hamilton "Skip" Bell from Marietta, GA was commissioned in 1967 upon graduation from North Georgia College. He deployed to Vietnam in 1969 and was assigned to the 1st Infantry Division. On numerous occasions he led his ground force against fortified enemy positions and defended firebases from enemy attacks. For these actions, he was awarded two Bronze Star Medals for Valor. Upon returning to the States, Captain Bell attended flight school and then joined the 1st Aviation Brigade on his second Vietnam tour. During one particularly mission, his helicopter came under intense ground fire while successfully recovering a senior policy advisor and his party from a village under attack. For this selfless act, he was awarded the Air Medal for Valor. In 1981 he joined the Army Reserve, served in Operation Desert Shield and later retired with a total of 31 years of active and reserve service.



Mark Simpson Carr (VALOR)

Army Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Mark Simpson Carr from Cairo, GA was commissioned in 1963 upon graduation from the University of Georgia. He completed Army Flight School and soon deployed to Vietnam in 1966 as a Medical Evacuation "Dustoff" Pilot where he completed over 400 daring medical evacuation missions. On one particular mission, while attempting to evacuate wounded under intense enemy ground fire, he was forced to abort due to damage to his helicopter's tail section. After arriving back to the airfield, Carr obtained another aircraft and returned to successfully evacuate 28 wounded soldiers, again under heavy enemy ground fire. For this exceptionally heroic action, Captain Carr was awarded our nation's third highest award for valor, the Silver Star. Later that tour, Captain Carr was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for aerial heroics while evacuating 24 wounded from an exposed bomb crater surrounded by extremely thick jungle canopy.



John Nathan Deal (SERVICE)

Former Georgia Governor John Nathan Deal from Demorest, GA was commissioned in the Army Judge Advocate General Corps after graduating from Mercer University and obtaining his law degree from the Army JAG School in Charlottesville, WV. Captain Deal served on active duty from 1966 to 1968 at Fort Gordon, GA. After the Army, he began a law practice in Gainesville, GA followed by posts as Assistant District Attorney and Hall County Juvenile Judge. In 1980 he was elected to the Georgia State Senate serving for 12 years, followed by 17 years in the U.S. House of Representatives and as Governor from 2011-2019. Under his leadership, Georgia became the #1 State for Business from 2013-2016, the State grew its "Rainy Day Emergency Fund" to \$2.5 billion, and he led the way in the establishment of the Cyber Security Training Center in Augusta, GA, which works in conjunction with the US Army Cyber Command at Fort Gordon, GA. a branch of the U.S. Army Cyber Command at Fort Gordon.



Michael Wayne Harden (SERVICE)

Sergeant Michael Wayne Harden of Cumming, GA enlisted in the Marines after graduating high school in 1968. Soon after, he deployed to Vietnam in December 1968 to November 1969. After his tour, he was stationed in Washington D.C. as a Presidential Guard for President Nixon. Upon discharge and transitioning to civilian life, Michael unfortunately found himself in a new battle, one with drug and alcohol addiction. After an eight year struggle, he proclaimed victory over addiction through his tremendous faith. That struggle resulted in rebuilding his life around the mission to aid veterans and others struggling with addiction. In 1990, Michael borrowed a three-bedroom house in Cumming which became a home-base for an addiction program, and in 1991 "No Longer Bound" (NLB) was created as a nonprofit, offering a year-long addiction recovery program. Today, NLB campus has expanded to 8.5 acres and is a state licensed, clinical treatment program which has aided more than 1,400 men in overcoming their addictions.



Joseph Hillman, III (VALOR) (Killed-in-Action)

Army First Lieutenant Joseph Hillman, III from Marietta, GA was commissioned in 1967 upon graduation from North Georgia College. In December of that same year, he arrived in Vietnam and was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division. In January 1968, then Second Lieutenant Hillman was awarded the first of two Silver Stars and the first of two Purple Heart Medals for actions taken while leading a patrol through thick jungle undergrowth and encountering intense automatic weapons fire. Although wounded and suffering loss of vision in one eye, he directed return fire from his unit while constantly being exposed to hostile incoming rounds. Moving across the kill zone numerous times, he enabled several of his wounded men to be recovered. On 22 July 1968, First Lieutenant Hillman was posthumously awarded his second Silver Star and Purple Heart Medal for actions during an assault against a Viet Cong stronghold. Although his unit successfully defeated the enemy, there were many U.S. casualties, including the loss of Joe Hillman.



Jackson Lynn Hudson (VALOR) (Posthumous)

Air Force Captain Jackson Lynn Hudson from Hapeville, GA was commissioned in 1964 upon graduation from the USAF Academy. After flight school and an assignment at Eglin Air Force Base, FL he deployed to Southeast Asia in 1969 as an A-1E Skyraider Pilot of a special operations unit stationed in Thailand. During his combat tour he was twice awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for bravery. On 6 October 1969, Captain Hudson was responsible for one of the largest search and rescue missions ever attempted in Southeast Asia. With complete disregard for his own safety and despite extremely intense enemy ground fire, he made repeated low-level passes delivering ordnance to within 10 meters of the survivor's position resulting in the dispatch of an estimated 400-600 enemy and while saving the lives of 54 friendlies. For this action, he was awarded our Nation's second highest award for valor, the Air Force Cross. After the military, Jack flew for Delta until his retirement. Sadly, he unexpectedly passed away in March 2002.



William Cooke Huff (SERVICE)

Marine Corps Captain "Bill" Huff of Columbus, GA received his commission through the USMC Platoon Leaders Course while at the University of Georgia, graduating and commissioning in 1965. Bill deployed to Vietnam and served with the 3rd Marine Division from 1966 to 1967. During his combat tour he was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal for Valor. When he returned stateside he began 50+ years of service to his community in the following endeavors: Founding Chairman, UGA Student Veterans Resource Center; Military Affiliate Student Advisory Committee, Columbus State University; Personally funded many veteran scholarships at both UGA & CSU; Co-founder, Plateau Warrior Support Team, American Legion Post 370 which sponsors Visit a Vet program in assisted care units; Order of St. Maurice Awardee by the National Infantry Association for his support of soldiers and veterans. Bill Huff has lived a life of total dedication to his fellow Americans.



Ronald Lambert Masten (VALOR) (POW)

Air Force Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Ron Masten of Woodstock, GA was commissioned through USAF ROTC upon graduation from the University of Kansas in 1963. Following flight training and a tour in Europe, he deployed to Southeast Asia in 1966, stationed in Thailand. While flying his 34th mission in January 1967, his RF-4C jet was struck by enemy fire which forced him to eject. Upon landing, he was captured and endured six plus years of mental and physical torture as a Prisoner of War while repeatedly resisting demands for confessions for propaganda purposes. For his bravery as a POW as well as extraordinary achievement while participating in combat aerial flight, he was awarded: Air Medal (4), Purple Heart (2), Bronze Star Medal (2), Distinguished Flying Cross, Legion of Merit and our Nation's third highest award for valor, the Silver Star. After his repatriation in 1973, he continued to serve on active duty and also later served in the Alabama Air National Guard and the USAF Reserve.



Charles Davis Mize (VALOR) (Posthumous)

Marine Corps Major General (Ret) "Charlie" Mize of Cave Spring, GA graduated from the United States Naval Academy and was commissioned as a Marine Infantry Second Lieutenant in June of 1944. Thereupon he launched a 32-year career as a "three war" veteran serving in World War II, the Korean War and Vietnam. During the Battle of Okinawa he was seriously wounded and was awarded the Purple Heart. During the Korean War he helped defend the Pusan Perimeter and the fight to recapture Seoul while in the northern most Marine unit during the Chosin Reservoir Battle. For his valorous actions in Korea, which included saving the life of a severely wounded comrade by carrying him through enemy fire to safety, Major General Mize was awarded a second Purple Heart, the Bronze Star Medal for Valor and our Nation's second highest award for valor, the Navy Cross. He spent a year fighting in Vietnam and was awarded a second Bronze Star Medal for Valor. Major General Mize ultimately died from complications of Agent Orange that he contracted in Vietnam.



Patricia Mauldin Ross (SERVICE)

Air Force Colonel (Ret) Patricia Mauldin Ross of Sharpsburg, GA was commissioned through USAF ROTC upon graduation from the University of South Florida. After a 25-year career, she dedicated her post-military life to serving veterans. As the Military Affairs Director for the Technical College System of Georgia, she led veterans related positive changes for all 22 colleges. She was selected to lead the first Georgia Veterans Education Resource Center (VECTR) which became a local and national model for education, benefits, business and training in high demand careers, serving 35,000+ veterans and their families. In 2021 Patricia Ross was appointed Commissioner, Georgia Department of Veterans Services (GDVS) where she advocates for our 700,000+ veterans statewide, as well as continually garnering VA grants to assist veteran causes. She expanded the presence of GDVS by increasing the number of state-wide offices from 49 to 65. Commissioner Ross epitomizes the ideal of giving one's all for veterans.



Jeffrey Dean Struecker (VALOR)

Army Chaplain, Major (Ret) Jeff Struecker of Columbus, GA entered the Army at Fort Benning, GA and served in the 75th Ranger Regiment in positions from Private to Platoon Sergeant. While assigned to the 75th Struecker participated in Operation Just Cause in Panama in 1989 and Operation Desert Storm in Kuwait in 1992. In 1993 while serving in Task Force Ranger in Mogadishu, Somalia, Staff Sergeant Struecker was awarded our Nation's third highest award for valor, the Silver Star for mounting and directing a ground reaction force through heavy small arms and rocket propelled grenade fire. Jeff continued his military service teaching ROTC at the University of Louisville and later answered a calling to become an Army chaplain, serving in the 82nd Airborne Division, Ranger Training Brigade and the 75th Ranger Regiment. During these years, he deployed a dozen times as part of Operation Freedom in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Chaplain Struecker retired in 2011 and continues to serve our military communities and our veterans throughout Georgia.



Stephen James Townsend (ACHIEVEMENT)

Army (4 star) General (Ret) Steven Townsend of Griffin, GA was commissioned in 1982 as an Infantry Officer upon graduation from North Georgia College. He rose to the highest levels while serving and leading soldiers at every echelon including service in the following four divisions: 82nd Airborne, 101st Air Assault, 7th Light Infantry & 10th Mountain. He was the Commanding General of XVIII Airborne Corps with his final assignment as Commander, U.S. Africa Command. His joint commands included the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Central Command, the Joint Staff and regional commands in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria. In 2016-2017 he led the multinational effort to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq & Syria during Operation Inherent Resolve. General Townsend earned many of our nation's highest awards during his long and storied 40-year career to include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal with "C" device for combat service, Bronze Star Medal for Valor and two awards of the Combat Infantryman Badge.



Carvis Pittman Williams (VALOR) (Posthumous)

Army Sergeant Carvis Williams of Snellville, GA entered the Army in 1944 during World War II and fought in both France and Germany as an Infantryman. He was assigned to the famed 7th Infantry Regiment of the 3rd Infantry Division. While participating in fighting on German soil, his battalion suffered great losses, but later launched a massive attack to breach the Siegfried Line. Pursuing the enemy across the Rhine River, the 7th secured Nurnberg under American control on their way to closing the war. During the months long siege, then Private First Class Williams risked his life repeatedly to protect his fellow soldiers amid close range fighting despite being exposed to hostile fire. For his gallantry in action, PFC Williams was awarded our Nation's third highest award for valor, the Silver Star. After discharge from the Army in 1946, Carvis returned to Gwinnett County, GA, serving his community in a variety of leadership positions.



James Wesley Williams (VALOR) (POW)

Air Force Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) James Williams of Norcross, GA was commissioned through USAF ROTC upon graduation from Tennessee State University in 1967. Following flight and survival training, he deployed to Southeast Asia in 1971, stationed in Thailand and from where he flew F-4 Phantom Fighter Jets on combat missions over North Vietnam. In May 1972 with 40 days remaining on his tour, he was shot down on his 228th mission and ejected over North Vietnam. He was captured and confined to the infamous Hanoi Hilton. After spending 313 days in captivity, he was released in March 1973 during "Operation Homecoming". Following his return to the U.S., he became a command pilot with 3,100+ flying hours in five different aircraft including the F-15 Eagle. Among his 58 military decorations are: Prisoner of War Medal, Air Medal (15), Purple Heart (2), Bronze Star Medal for Valor and the Distinguished Flying Cross (4). Lieutenant Colonel James Williams retired in 1995 with 28 years of service.