



Minnesota  
Humanities  
Center

MNHUM.ORG

## For Immediate Release

### 2018 Minnesota Humanities Center Veterans' Voices Award Recipients Announced

**Aug. 16, 2018 — ST. PAUL, Minn.** — The Minnesota Humanities Center (MHC) is proud to recognize 15 Veterans' Voices Awardees in 2018. Minnesotans from across the state nominated Veterans who have honorably served and have shown exemplary community service beyond their military service. From a host of nominees, eight "On the Rise" Veterans (age 40 and under) and seven "Legacy" Veterans (age 41 and over) were selected by a panel of their peers to receive the Veterans' Voices Award.

MHC will present the awards at the Veterans' Voices Award Ceremony on Sunday, Oct. 7, 2018 at the University of St. Thomas Anderson Student Center in St. Paul. The event is free and open to the public, but [registration](#) is required. Achievements of the 15 Minnesota Veterans (listed below) will be recognized. Gulf War Veteran, WCCO-TV reporter and 2017 Awardee, Reg Chapman, will emcee. [Sebastian Junger](#) will deliver the keynote address. Junger is an award-winning and internationally-acclaimed author and journalist.

These awards are part of the Humanities Center's **Veterans' Voices** program that seeks to bridge the Veteran – civilian divide by drawing on the power of the humanities to call attention to the contributions, and often-missed stories, of Veterans. This program empowers all Minnesota Veterans to speak in their own voices through storytelling, literature, theatre, discussion groups, and more – amplifying the voices of Veterans throughout our state.

This year's awardees include those working toward social justice, a member of the Special Guerilla Unit trained by the CIA to fight in the Vietnam War, a director of PTSD services for Veterans and their families, an instructor at a local community college, and many more.

#### **The 2018 Veterans' Voices Awardees are:**

##### **On the Rise Awardees**

**Calinn Green**, U.S. Air Force *Elko*. **Diane Kinney**, U.S. Army *Maplewood*. **Sailor Jerri**, U.S. Navy *Milaca*. **Charlene Nelson**, U.S. Army *Pengilly*. **Stevena Pen**, U.S. Marine Corps *St. Paul*. **Samuel V. Phipps**, U.S. Army *Minneapolis*. **Darius Simon**, U.S. Army *Frazee*. **Alan Geoffrey Stage**, U.S. Army Reserve *Hutchinson*.

##### **Legacy Awardees**

**Laura Bartley**, U.S. Air Force *North Branch*. **Terry Branham**, U.S. Army *Lakeville*. **Carl Leslie Fordahl**, U.S. Army *Bloomington*. **Ronald Hunter**, U.S. Navy *Golden Valley*. **Joseph Leonard Nayquonabe, Sr.**, U.S. Army *Onamia*. **Thomas Scott Wilkinson**, U.S. Army *St. Francis*. **Xai Paul Vang**, Special Guerilla Unit *North St. Paul*.

"The Humanities Center is honored to recognize these 15 exemplary Veterans," says MHC President & CEO, David O'Fallon. "Our deeply-held belief at MHC is that all voices deserve to be heard in their own authenticity – especially those who have been absented or marginalized from our public awareness. In many ways, Veterans' experiences are an absent narrative in our culture and these awards aim to amplify their important voices and help bridge the increasing Veteran-civilian divide."

For more information about the Veterans' Voices program and to register for the event, visit <https://mnhum.org/vets/award/>. Download our [media kit](#).

**About the Minnesota Humanities Center:**

Founded in 1971, the **Minnesota Humanities Center** is a statewide nonprofit organization and full service event center located in St. Paul, Minnesota. The Humanities Center offers a new way to think about our future, grounded in the humanities, and collaborates with organizations and individuals to develop programs that facilitate and frame conversations and strengthen connections. The Humanities Center works to bring into public life the authentic voices of all people, especially those that have been absent or marginalized. The Humanities Center is a resource for the state of Minnesota and is affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The mission of the Minnesota Humanities Center is to build a thoughtful, literate, and engaged society. More information about the Humanities Center is available at [mnhum.org](http://mnhum.org) or join us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

**About the National Endowment for the Humanities:**

Created in 1965 as an independent federal agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities supports research and learning in history, literature, philosophy, and other areas of the humanities by funding selected, peer-reviewed proposals from around the nation. Additional information about the National Endowment for the Humanities and its grant programs is available at: [www.neh.gov](http://www.neh.gov).

###

**Contact:**

Elle Lyons, Director of Communications, 651-772-4251 [elle@mnhum.org](mailto:elle@mnhum.org)

