



For Immediate Release

Minnesota Humanities Center Announces Fifth Annual Veterans' Voices Award Recipients

August 16, 2017—SAINT PAUL, Minn. — The Minnesota Humanities Center is proud to recognize 21 Veterans' Voices Awardees in 2017. 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 13 "Legacy" Veterans (age 41 and over) were selected by a panel of their peers to receive the **Veterans' Voices Award**.

Awards will be presented at the **Veterans' Voices Award Ceremony** (a public event) on Monday, September 11, 2017 at the **University of St. Thomas Anderson Student Center** in Saint Paul. Public and private sector achievements of the 21 Minnesota Veterans (listed below) will be recognized. Gulf War Veteran, WCCO-TV reporter and 2017 Awardee, Reg Chapman, will emcee. William D. "Bro" Adams will be the 2017 keynote speaker. Adams is a Vietnam War Veteran and, most recently, was Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

These awards are part of the Humanities Center's **Veterans' Voices** program that draws 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, art, theatre, discussion groups and more -- amplifying the voices of Veterans throughout our state.

The 2017 Awardees represent an inspiring variety of unique Minnesota voices and lived experiences. A State Senator, one of the first women Marines in WWII, women's rights advocates, father and son co-awardees, a Khmer Republic (Cambodia) Army Vet and many more are represented among this year's recipients. These Veterans represent many areas of the state, many ranks and branches of service, and many of the wars, conflicts and campaigns of the U.S. military and other militaries over the past 100 years.

The 2017 Veterans' Voices Awardees are:

On the Rise Awardees

Shannon R. Doty, Army National Guard. *Minneapolis*. **Lindsay V. Erdmann**, U.S. Marine Corps. *Saint Paul*. **Samantha Dennis**, Minnesota Air National Guard. *Prior Lake*. **Dennis Draughn**, Minnesota Army National Guard. *Minneapolis*. **Janet Lorenzo**, U.S. Navy. *Inver Grover Heights*. **Michael McLaughlin**, U.S. Marine Corps. *Mankato*. **Kayla Bellefeuille Simon**, Minnesota Army National Guard. *Frazee*. **Luther C. Talks**, Army National Guard. *Waconia*.

Legacy Awardees

Wendell Affield, U.S. Navy. *Bemidji*. **Senator Bruce D. Anderson**, U.S. Navy, Minnesota Air National Guard. *Buffalo*. **Marilyn Anderson**, U.S. Army Reserves. *Farmington*. **Katherine M. Wilhelmy Bauer**, U.S. Navy. *Coon Rapids*. **Reginald Chapman**, U.S. Army Reserves. *Minneapolis*. **Major John Donovan**, Minnesota Army National Guard. *Big Lake*. **Glenn D. Jakola**, U.S. Army. *Chisholm*. **Thomas McLaughlin**, U.S. Marine Corps. *Mankato*. **Michael Rivard**, U.S. Navy. *Minneapolis*. **Elizabeth Janet Steele Whitbeck**, U.S. Marine Corps. *Stillwater*. **Thomas Whitebird**, U.S. Army. *Cloquet*. **Raymond Wilson**, U.S. Army. *Saint Paul*. **Yorn Yan**, Khmer Republic Army. *Mendota Heights*.

"We are honored to again recognize a cohort of deserving Veterans via the 2017 Veterans' Voices Award," says David O'Fallon, President, Minnesota Humanities Center. "Every year, I am humbled by the great work that these men and

woman are doing in our state. The stories of these Veterans showcase the rich and varied lives that Veterans have outside of and beyond their military service.”

For more information on the Veterans’ Voices program, to view all 2017 awardee bios and purchase event tickets, visit <https://mnhum.org/vets/award/>. Download our [Veterans’ Voices 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 Saint 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 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.

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Contact:

Elle Lyons, Director of Communications, 651-772-4251 elle@mnhum.org

