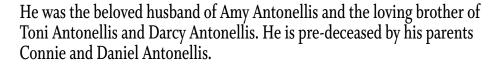


# In REMEMBRANCE

### **John Antonellis**

John "Jay" Antonellis, 62, of Denville, passed away peacefully at his home surrounded by his loving family on July 7, 2019. John was a corporal in the US Army attached to the 11<sup>th</sup> Special Forces as an intelligence analyst. He graduated from Chico State University in California with a Bachelor's degree. John retired after a long career as a Municipal Bond Trader. During retirement, he enjoyed giving his time serving as a trustee for the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation.





### This year lost, but not forgotten.

### Matthew Swajkowski

Matthew Joseph Swajkowski, age 73, of Union, New Jersey passed away Friday, June 19, 2020. Matthew was born April 3, 1947 in Newark, NJ. He was the son of Alice (Ziombkowsiki) and Joseph Swajkowski.

Matt as he was affectionately known was a graduate of St. Peters College and Seton Hall University. Matt enlisted in the Army and served during the Vietnam Conflict in the Americal Division.

After returning home, Matt taught Chemistry at Carteret and Belleville High School. He met his wife, Cynthia, on a blind date and eventually they were married and moved to Union, NJ 43 years ago. Matt loved the beach, especially Cape Cod and traveling.





Matt spent his retirement working with young people as a tour guide at the Vietnam Memorial and Museum in Holmdel, NJ and was a life member of DAV, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Americal Division Veterans Association, St James Church in Springfield and a member of Rutgers Living History.

Matthew is survived by his wife, Cynthia (Felegi), son, Matthew V. and daughter-in-law, Alison.

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New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial and Vietnam Era Museum

1 Memorial Lane (Garden State Parkway Exit 116) Holmdel, NJ 07733 732.335.0033 www.NJVVMF.org



# Mission

The New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation is committed to sharing the experiences of the Vietnam War Era and its enduring legacy with future generations.

Our Memorial recognizes the valor of New Jersey's Veterans and the sacrifices of their families and communities. Our Museum encourages learning by exploring the Vietnam War Era through inclusive and objective exhibitions.

# **Values**

We value the foundation built by Vietnam Veterans and community groups that has enabled us to evolve into a thriving, community-oriented, nonprofit organization. With these values, we look toward our future, while embracing this foundation:

RELEVANCE: Understanding that museums are reflections of our communities and culture and that our role is continually evolving. A commitment to best practices in interpretation and technology as a means to visitor engagement.

INCLUSIVITY: Commitment to expanding our understanding and narrative of the Vietnam Era considering new perspectives, historical sources, and scholarship.

TRANSPARENCY: Openness in our practices, values, and mission to foster and preserve the confidence of our community.

PROFESSIONALISM: Commitment to excellence in support of all aspects of our mission - promoting best practices and professionalism of our staff, board of trustees, volunteers, educational offerings, and collections care.

# Vision

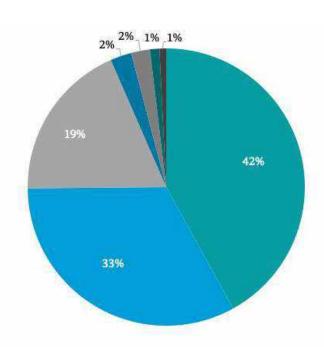
Innovative interpretation, best practices in preservation, and excellence in public programming will engage visitors in dialogue that enhances and expands understanding about the Vietnam War Era.

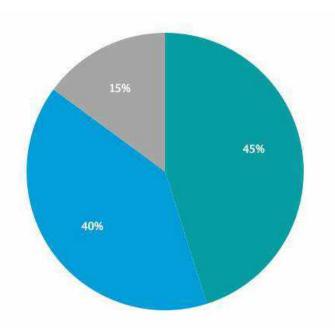


# **Statement of FINANCES**

### **Operating Income**

Donations	42%
\$333,902	
Donated Services & Faci \$261,400	lities 33%
Special Events	19%
\$147,887	
<b>Investment Income</b>	2%
\$19,600	
Merchandise	2%
\$17,471	
Admission Fees	1%
\$8,766	
Membership \$6,249	1%





### **Operating Expenses**

Programs	45%
\$454,935	
Administration	40%
\$402,632	
Fundraising	15%
\$150,346	

# **Special EVENTS**

The New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation is a private non-profit organization which operates both the Memorial and the Vietnam Era Museum. We rely on the generosity of our community to continue our work and keep our site open to all who want to visit. Each year, we host several special events. Partnering with members of our community, we encourage our supporters to get to know our work, our Veterans, and become advocates for the Foundation.

### 25th Annual Golf Outing

This August we kicked off our event season with our 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing at Eagle Oaks Golf and Country Club. Eagle Oaks is a championship caliber golf course designed by Jack Nicklaus and Johnny Miller.

This phenomenal event sells out every year, and this year we raised an impressive \$93,000. Participants are supporting the future of the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial and the work of the Vietnam Era Museum – the only site of its kind in the nation dedicated to the Vietnam Era.



### 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Clay Shoot

In September, we held our Annual Clay Shoot. Hosted by the Hudson Farm Club in Andover, NJ, this signature event raised over \$64,000 to support the organization's work to honor the legacies of New Jersey's Vietnam Veterans.



# **CEREMONIES**

Our annual ceremonies continued to strengthen our relationships with our Veterans community, legislators, and the NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. Due to gathering restrictions in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, our spring ceremonies looked very different this year as we produced our first-ever all virtual ceremonies broadcase live on YouTube and Facebook, allowing our content to be accessed across the state and beyond.

### **Veterans Day Ceremony**

This year, the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial was selected to host the official Veterans Day Ceremony for the State of New Jersey. In partnership with the NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, we were honored to welcome guest speakers NJ Governor Phil Murphy and Susan Barker Rilliet, Gold Star sister of Medal of Honor Recipient Jedh Barker.

Thank you to the General Anthony C. McAuliffe NY-NJ Chapter 101st Airborne Division Association & VVA Chapter 200 for their support of this year's ceremony.





### **NJ Vietnam Veterans Remembrance Day**

Our first vitual ceremony was produced for New Jersey Vietanam Veterans Remembrance Day, honoring the more than 200,000 New Jersey residents who served during the Vietnam era, from 1959 to 1975. This year's ceremony also commemorates the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dedication of the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial. The annual awarding of the New Jersey Service Medals was read by Elizabeth Schofield of the NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

### **Memorial Day**

Our virtual Memorial Day Ceremony honored the brave men and women who sacrificed their lives to protect our rights and defend our freedoms. This year's ceremony invited Vietnam Veterans to share the meaning of Memorial Day and included members of the community from across New Jersey who joined us as "We Remember" the sacrifices of those who lost their lives serving in our Armed Forces.



# **Community EVENTS**

### Rolling Thunder Ride for Freedom



This year marked the 24<sup>th</sup> Rolling Thunder Ride for freedom. The ride ended at the Memorial with a touching ceremony ensuring that those still considered POWs and those missing in action are remembered.

### New Jersey Run for the Fallen

Each September, NJ Run for the Fallen ends their three day run at the New Jersey Gold Star Family Monument on our campus. In an apolitical reflection of remembrance, a team of military runners from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurts and other locations across the U.S. come together to embark on a 190+ mile journey from Cape May to Holmdel, to honor every New Jersey service member killed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, Operation New Dawn, and other conflicts. Each mile is dedicated to a fallen NI Hero and their Gold Star Family with the goal of creating a 190+ memorial trail through New Jersey.

# America In December we were one

**Wreaths Across** 

In December we were once again honored by a visit from the Wreaths Across America Caravan. During a ceremony that honored New Jersey's Gold Star Families and the 1,563 memorialized on our Wall, the organization made sure that these individuals and their families will not be forgotten. During the ceremony, 366 wreaths were laid at our Memorial, one for each panel of the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial.





# **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are the core of the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation. Working with regional students and teachers, assisting with ceremonies, and staffing our front desk, our volunteers enrich our work in countless ways.

Rick Amsterdam Jim Biringer Carl Burns Andy Butzko **Bob Cattrell** Tom Chalfant Michael Coale Anthony D'Altrui **Chuck Dauchert** Susan DiBarba Frank Dunn Cappy Everhard Joe Formola **Robert Frost Dick Furlong** Rich Goldstein Ron Guralnick Ken Gurbisz Maryanne Ioli Pat Keating



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# **EDUCATION**

#### 2020 Teacher of the Year: Rebecca DiBrienza



Since 2018, the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation has recognized one teacher from the State of New Jersey who has made valuable contributions to the study and teaching of the Vietnam War Era. The Foundation seeks to celebrate and show appreciation to our long-time network of educators that has made teaching this complex history a priority.

Rebecca DiBrienza was selected by the Teacher of the Year Committee, consisting of staff, board members, and volunteers, for her work teaching the era and for her multiple collaborations with the Foundation. "As a lifelong learner and

self-professed history nerd, I'm thankful that organizations like the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation exist to keep my passion for history alive and consistently provide fresh new ideas to think about," Rebecca said when she was informed she would be the honoree this year.

Rebecca has been an educator for 10 years and an avid music fan for 32 years. She has been able to incorporate her love of music into her Social Studies classroom at Scotch Plains Fanwood High School. Rebecca has developed a unique approach to teaching U.S. History through song, by which students in her classes learn about fundamental genres of American music, what they sound like, what inspired them, and how technology has helped music evolve. Each unit is accompanied by a playlist and a "song of the week" as a valuable primary source that relates to the content and helps convey to the students the context of a given time period. She has found that this stimulates discussion, sharpens analytical thinking skills, increases student engagement, and creates a love for the social studies.

Her 100-plus students tour the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial annually as a planned school field trip. Rebecca's favorite thing about the trip is the personal touch that every Veteran Tour Guide provides. Their time and attention allow students to ask questions freely, build empathy for the challenges American servicemen experienced, and gain ideas for the oral history project they conduct at the end of the year. This aligns with why Rebecca believes this era is important. In her own words "it allows students to put human faces and individual stories and experiences into the context of a larger global conflict".

### **Annual Scholarships**

The New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation awards two \$2,500 scholarships for post-high school education (college, university or trade school) each year. This year's winning scholarships were awarded to Abigail Lim of Bernardsville High School who will be attending the University of Virginia, and Julia Zulin of Toms River High School East who will be attending Marist College. This year's scholarship recipients read their winning essays for our virtual Memorial Day Ceremony.

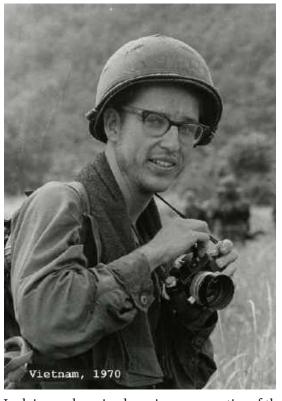


ABIGAIL LIM
BERNARDSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL



JULIA ZULIN
TOMS RIVER HIGH SCHOOL EAST

# **CURATORIAL**



# As You Were: Stephen Warner Words and Images from Vietnam

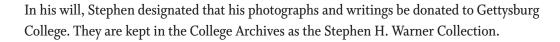
In partnership with Gettysburg College, this year's special exhibit featured a collection of photographs, letters, and journal writings from Vietnam Veteran Stephen Henry Warner, who was born and raised in Skillman, NJ. He graduated from Princeton High School in 1964 and then continued his studies at Gettysburg College. It was during his time at Gettysburg that Stephen became a vocal leader of the anti-war protest movement on campus.

Stephen graduated with top honors from Gettysburg in 1968. He then attended Yale Law School for one year before receiving his draft notice. Stephen was inducted into the United States Army and was sent to Basic Training at Fort Dix. He arrived in Vietnam on March 23, 1970, and was assigned to the Army Information Office at Long Binh. As an Information Officer he was given a pass that allowed him to travel freely throughout the country. He spent weeks in the field with various units, rejecting the comforts of Long Binh and embracing the harsh realities of life as a grunt.

In doing so, he gained a unique perspective of the war and the people involved in it.

On February 14, 1971, Stephen was accompanying a road construction crew that was working in territory controlled by the North Vietnamese Army. The group was ambushed and the vehicle that Stephen was riding in was hit by an enemy rocket. He was killed in action one week before his 25th birthday and two weeks before he was scheduled to return home.

The photographs featured in this exhibition were all taken by Stephen Warner during his tour of duty in Vietnam that began in March of 1970 and ended with his death in February of 1971. The locations and identities of the individuals in the majority of the photographs are unknown. In this way, the men seen here become anonymous representatives of all those that served in Vietnam.







### The Spirit of Giving: An Ongoing Legacy

Our community was rocked by the loss of John Antonellis in July of this year, a longtime friend, volunteer, and trustee of the Foundation. John's generosity knew no bounds, and his family encouraged donations to be made in his memory to the Foundation after his passing. In consultation with his wife, Amy, these contributions were directed towards strengthening our educational programming by installing display cases throughout the Vietnam Era Museum to better incorporate our artifacts with the history of the Era illustrated in the Museum's panorama. These cases also help to preserve these priceless artifacts to be shared with generations to come.

# Remembrance PROGRAM

The New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial commemorates the loss of the 1,563 brave New Jerseyans who made the ultimate sacrifice serving in the Vietnam War. Standing before the black granite panels, you can feel the weight of these lives cut too short as you look into your own reflection in the stone. The Foundation works tirelessly to ensure that each one of these individuals is never forgotten. We work to carry their stories forward, from the hearts of their family and friends who will forever feel their loss.

In 2019 we launched the Remembrance Program, a community-based initiative to adopt each of the 366 panels every year. By adopting a panel, you learn about the lives of each Veteran honored on that date.

Many of us have a connection to an individual honored on our wall - a family member, a friend, a colleague, a student. But many of our lost veterans have no surviving family to remember their legacy. The Remembrance Program ensures that their stories are shared and that these brave New Jerseyans are never forgotten

Over the past year, forty-four panels have been adopted by members of our community, sharing the stories of the 281 New Jerseyans honored on those panels. 281 glimpses into the lives of these brave men and women, lost too soon in service to our country and in defense of our allies - reminding us that freedom is not free. Their sacrifice, along with so many others in our armed forces, will never be forgotten.

Support of the New Jersey Vietnan Veterans' Memorial Foundation, through programs like the Remembrance Program, is critical to our continued success. These contributions make a real, lasting impact in sustaining the Foundation and demonstrate our steadfast support of our Veterans, their families, and our commitment to remembering their legacies.

### Thank You to Our 2020 REMEMBRANCE PROGRAM DONORS

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Jan. 10 Brick Twp. Memorial Post 348

Jan. 13 JET Electrical Testing, LLC

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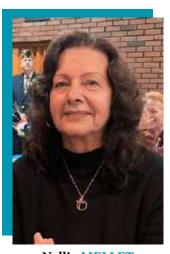
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