



## **Construction begins for \$17 million expansion of National Purple Heart Hall of Honor**

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New Windsor, NY According to governor Andrew Cuomo, construction is beginning on a \$17 million expansion of the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor in Orange County. The Hall of Honor is being expanded with almost 4,300 s/f of new and refurbished exhibit space, with an increased emphasis on stories of individual award recipients.

“The Purple Heart is awarded to our country’s bravest service members who were wounded or killed in combat while defending this state and this nation,” Cuomo said. “The expansion of the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor will serve as a tribute to these men and women who have made our freedom possible and help ensure we never forget their service and sacrifice. This project will also honor the memory of Senator Larkin, a decorated war hero who spearheaded the establishment of this museum and dedicated 70 years of his life to public service.”

Opened in 2006, the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor is the first facility in the nation dedicated to the estimated 1.8 million recipients of the Purple Heart, which is awarded to American military personnel who have been wounded or killed by enemy action.

The project will involve expanding the Hall of Honor to incorporate integrated audio-visual and media presentations, as well as museum-quality casework for each area with interpretive graphics, locally controlled lighting, touch-screen interactive monitors, and multiple large-format graphic displays. Once completed, the hall will feature new exhibits that tell stories about joining the service, the day of the incident, field treatment and evacuation, the changing nature of warfare, the consequences of war, road to recovery and the ultimate sacrifice. The expanded exhibits will include more personal stories, interactive displays, and artifacts that highlight the experiences of featured Purple Heart recipients.

Currently, the hall has an online Roll of Honor database representing Purple Heart recipients from all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, Samoa and the Philippines. Work on the Roll of Honor will continue during the construction project.

Starting Nov. 15th, the hall will be closed during construction. An accelerated construction schedule will allow the facility to reopen by November 2020. During this period, the adjacent New Windsor Cantonment State Historic Site galleries will also be closed. However, the Cantonment grounds will continue to be open year-round and site events will continue including President’s Day weekend and costumed living history from April through October. During construction, a temporary exhibit about

the hall will be located at Washington's Headquarters State Historic Site in Newburgh. A traveling display will also be on exhibit at the New York State Fair and at other locations across the state.

Since the Hall opened, it has drawn more than 176,000 visitors. It offers educational programs for schools, camps, and scout groups as well as organized tours for adult groups. In addition, events and activities are held throughout the year to commemorate significant anniversaries or historic events related to the Purple Heart and its history.

This project builds upon governor Cuomo's commitment to the 750,000 veterans living in the state. Under his administration, New York has enacted the nation's largest fund for service-disabled veteran-owned businesses, certifying over 600 businesses to date; convened the state's first-ever Summit on Veterans and Military Families; launched the Justice for Heroes Initiative to fund legal clinics at law schools that provide assistance to veterans; provided funding for nonprofits that offer peer-to-peer support for veterans and their families; and waived the application fee for veterans taking Civil Service exams. The state has also dedicated over \$50 million to establishing supportive housing projects and other developments for homeless and at-risk veterans and their families throughout the state. Governor Cuomo's efforts have made New York the most veteran-friendly state in America.

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