

Gary E. Steele



Retired from the United States Air Force and from the State of Texas, retiring after 42 years of state and federal service. Gary's assignments while in the military included a tour in Vietnam where he was a crew chief and worked on the EC-47 Gooney Bird. His other assignments included several tours and trips to all the bases in the Pacific Theater. He earned the second highest rank (E-8 SMSgt) possible under the enlisted structure. His job titles ranged from Crew Chief to Training Superintendent, Combat Comm Advisor and Detachment Commander. During Gary's 21 years, he received over 40 decorations and awards for his service.

Major Military Honors (Over 40 Military Awards and Decoration):

- 3 Meritorious Service Medals
- 2 Air Force Commendation Medals
- 1 Air Force Presidential Unit Citation
- 4 USAF Outstanding Unit Award with one for Valor
- 7 USAF Good Conduct Medals
- National Defense Service Medal
- Vietnam Service Medal
- Small Arms Expert
- Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal
- Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Device Medal
- Cold War Medal.

Education: Gary earned a BS Degree in Occupational Education and MS Degree in Human Relations and Business. He did complete some leveling work on a Doctorate in Applied Gerontology.

Civilian Work -Gary's civilian work included teaching at the High School level and program management at the University of North Texas and the University of Texas at Dallas.

Past President of the Cooperative Education Association (CEI). CEI is a sixty year old organization that provides support on a national level for students receiving internships and cooperative education experience. His most noted accomplishment was putting on a world wide conference in Washington DC.

Past President of the Texas Cooperative Education and Internship Association. Highlights for his term include developing and implementing a website for practitioners that provided cooperative education and internships to Texas State schools and colleges.

Community Activities:

Past President and Board Member of the Denton Watch Group. Co-founders that had a mission to make neighborhoods of Denton safer and a nicer place to live.

Board of Directors Grand Chapter of Texas, Order of the Eastern Star for 5 Years. Provided guidance and leadership to an organization of over 40,000 members. One of his accomplishments was being able to travel to Germany and present a check for \$30,000 to the Military Wounded Warriors Fund.

Board of Directors for the Denton Animals Shelter Foundation for 3 years. Instrumental in helping the Foundation raise over two million dollars to help jump start a new 15,000 square foot animal care center in Denton, TX. Developed the first website for the Foundation.

Past President of the Denton Citizen Police Academy Alumni Association for 3 years. Earned the Police Volunteer of the Year Award for two years in a row. He was also instrumental in building a new firing range for the Police Department and creating a Citizens on Patrol program that augmented the duties of active police officers.

Member of the City of Denton Animal Shelter Advisory Committee (2014-2016)

Served on the Patient's Rights Committee for Physically Challenged Children, State of Hawaii.

Past President and board member of the Green Valley School Historical Society. Part of a group of Vietnam Veterans that restored a 100 year old historic school

house. They spent over five years and 15,000 man hours to preserve the history of the school and have made it into a modern day community center.

Past President of the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter #920. A local Chapter that has almost 200 members.

President and Founder of the Texas Veterans Hall of Fame. A non-profit group that recognizes Texas Veterans for their service, sacrifices and accomplishments.

Civilian Honors:

Kiwaian of the Year, 1987

Denton, TX Police Department Volunteer of the Year (2012 and 2013).

Denton Citizen Police Academy Alumni Presidents Award

City of Denton-Outstanding Neighborhood Leadership Award (2014)

32nd Degree Master Mason

Presidential Gold and Silver Service Awards

Alumnus of the Year from Sperry High School, Sperry Ok (2017)

Ambassador for the Oklahoma Military Hall of Fame (2019)

National Defense Committee Daughters of the American Revolution Distinguished Citizen Medal (2020)

United States Congressional Award:

U.S Congressional Veterans Commendation (2015) for his work with Veterans and the community.

United States Presidential Award:

Life Time Achievement Award

Gold and Silver Service Awards

Family: Married 22 years to LeJean Henson of Waco, TX. They have a son that lives in Williamsburg, VA and a daughter that lives in Plano, TX. Two grand sons ages 20 and 16.

