

Rep. Israel worked to correct James Oresto's military record earning him 4 military medals

Sayville, NY – On Tuesday, Rep. Steve Israel (D – Huntington) presented Beatrice Oresto with four military medals, including a Purple Heart, that her husband James Oresto earned but never received. Private First Class James Oresto served in the United States Army during the Korean War.



“For more than three years, James Oresto was held prisoner by communist forces in North Korea. And for decades, his sacrifices were unrecognized by the United States Military. Today, we’re finally correcting that wrong. I’m proud to present James’ wife Beatrice with the honors he should have received long ago,” said Rep. Israel.

PFC James Oresto served in the United States Army 19th Infantry Regiment of the 24th Division in Korea and was captured by the North Korean Forces on July 16, 1950. James spent more than 3 years as a prisoner of war at the hands of North Korean forces. During this time James and other Americans withstood numerous beatings. James sustained head wounds from being beaten by the butt stocks of rifles. His commander was executed for having a West Point Alumni ring. James was released from captivity on August 28th 1953.

James is considered to be a "Tiger Survivor." Tiger Survivors is a veterans group of American soldiers, one British Marine, and 79 multi-national civilians who were held as prisoners by the communists in North Korea for 38 or more months from 1950 through 1954. According to group, the name Tiger Survivors is taken from the cruel and murdering North Korean Major, known as "The Tiger," who was in charge of the group from late 1950 through early 1951. Sixty-five percent of the group died in captivity, many shot or beaten to death, others as a result of explosion and untreated respiratory infections, according to the Tiger Survivors.

James' military record was incomplete and didn't recognize the injuries he sustained and time he spent as a POW. Rep. Israel's office worked to correct James' record to reflect his sacrifices. Following this correct, James earned the Purple Heart Medal, the Prisoner of War Medal, the Korean Service Medal and the United Nations Service Medal. The medals were presented to his widow Beatrice at a ceremony at the Sayville VFW. The event was attended by four generations of the family.