

Governor Quinn Salutes Illinois ☐ Fallen Heroes on Veterans Day

Written by Erin Wilson

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Unveils “Portrait of a Soldier” Exhibit in Chicago, Burbank, Pittsfield

CHICAGO – November 11, 2012. Governor Pat Quinn today unveiled the “Portrait of a Soldier” traveling exhibit now on display in the Family Pavilion at Chicago’s Navy Pier. This riveting collection by Mattoon artist Cameron Schilling features nearly 300 hand-drawn portraits of each Illinois servicemember killed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“As we honor our servicemembers on Veterans Day, we must remember the sacrifices so many have made for our country,” Governor Quinn said. “This exhibit is a reminder of how much a brave few have given on behalf of so many.”

Seen by thousands of people at more than 100 venues across the state since 2005, “Portrait of a Soldier” is a tribute to the 250 men and women from Illinois killed in the line of duty since 2001. Artist Cameron Schilling drew the first portrait in 2004, when he sketched Army Spc. Charles Neeley, a 19-year old Mattoon resident who died in Tikrit, Iraq, and presented the sketch to Neeley’s parents. Months later, while a student at Eastern Illinois University, Schilling committed to draw a portrait of every Illinois servicemember.

The exhibit is on display at Navy Pier now through November 13th. The exhibit can also be viewed at Prairie Trails Library at 8449 Moody Avenue in Burbank, IL through November 13th and at Pittsfield High School at 201 East Higbee Street in Pittsfield, IL through November 14th.

Governor Quinn has long made commitment to veterans' affairs, servicemembers and their families one of his top priorities throughout his career in public service. He has led programs including the Illinois Warrior Assistance Program and the Veterans Cash lottery ticket, which has awarded more than \$10 million to non-profit organizations across the state that provide health care and post-traumatic stress disorder treatment, housing assistance, disability benefits and other services to Illinois Veterans.

As Lieutenant Governor, Governor Quinn championed and helped enact the Illinois Military Family Relief Fund Act, which established a fund to provide grants to families of Illinois National Guard members and Illinois residents serving in the U.S. Armed Forces Reserve

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components who were called to active duty as a result of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. These grants help service members and their families with the costs of food, housing, utilities, medical services and other expenses they struggle to afford because a wage-earner has temporarily left civilian employment to be placed on active military duty.

For more information about programs for Illinois veterans and servicemembers, visit www.OperationHomefront.org

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