



Biography of Ronald G. Zola - Lt. Col (ret.) – U.S. Army

Ronald G. Zola retired from the U.S. Army as a Lt. Colonel in 1992 after twenty-five years of service. As an infantry officer, he served in a variety of command and staff assignments worldwide including: service in Vietnam, Korea, Germany, England and Panama. His awards and decorations include the Combat Infantryman Badge, Ranger Tab, Parachutist Badge, Legion of Merit and five Bronze Stars for Valor. Ron is married to Susan Allison Zola and they reside on Susan's 200-year-old family homestead. They have two children, Brian, 32, who lives in New York City and Rachel, 30 who lives in Sterling, VA. His hobbies include collecting Civil War artifacts and he is an avid Penn State Football fan.

Ron served as the Executive Director of the Vietnam Veterans Leadership Program of Western Pennsylvania (VVLP) from 1995 until his retirement in November, 2005. During his tenure as Executive Director, over 30,000 veterans have been served through VVLP's job placement and housing programs including 5,000 homeless veterans. Additionally, over 5,200 other veterans have been placed into jobs and 1,000 formerly homeless veterans have been provided with long-term housing assistance. VVLP's budget has grown from \$400,000 a year to over \$2,000,000 and the staff has increased from 7 full time positions to 23. VVLP also established 2 branch offices in Southwestern Pennsylvania. Ron was the 2000 Small Business Administration's "Veteran Advocate of the Year" for Western Pennsylvania and in 2001 he was inducted into the Chapel of Four Chaplains as a trustee for his Humanitarian Services.

A 1967 graduate of Penn State University, he has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education. Ron also has a Masters Degree in Counseling from Loyola University in New Orleans.

ORGANIZATIONS

The Military Officers Association of America- member, National Board of Directors
Pennsylvania Committee for Military & Veterans Education - member, Board of Directors
Allegheny County Federal Emergency Management - member, Board of Directors
Employer Support for the Guard & Reserve - SW PA. Awards Chair