

2019

El Paso County Veteran of the Year



Sergeant Major Robert D. Way, USMC (Ret.) was born April 1, 1942 in St. Louis Missouri. He enlisted in the Marine Corps on March 16, 1960 and went to Recruit Training at MCRD in San Diego on June 20, 1960. Sergeant Major Way served 30 years with the Marine Corps. Upon retirement from the Marine Corps in 1990, Sergeant Major Way became a MCJROTC instructor at the Marine Military in Harlingen, Texas, where he formed Fox Company as the newest unit in the Academy.

In 1993, he moved to El Paso and became an NJROTC instructor at Socorro High School until his retirement in 2005. During his tenure, Socorro NJROTC was selected as the No. 1 Unit in their area for several years. In his final year as a NJROTC instructor at Socorro High School, Socorro NJROTC was selected in 1995 as the No. 1 NJROTC in the whole nation.

Sergeant Major Way has been an active member of El Paso's Deane Hawkins Detachment, Marine Corps League since 1993. In 2012, he was selected as the Department of Texas Marine of the Year. He has served as the Detachment Chaplain, as the Adjutant and as Detachment Commandant from 2005 — 2017. He was elected from 2015-2016 to serve as the Department of Texas Senior Vice Commandant and was elected as the State Commandant from 2017 to 2018. Sergeant Major Way is also involved in many youth and veterans related community service activities in El Paso. Sergeant Major Way was one of four brothers in the Marine Corps and is the youngest of — and the last of — 14 siblings. He met his wife, Mildred (Ricki) at the American Embassy in Cyprus, where she worked with the Deputy Chief of Mission in the Ambassador's Suite. They have two sons. We thank Sergeant Major Way for his service and for all his outstanding work in the community!