

From: "Patterson, Bernie" <bpatters@uwsp.edu>

Date: June 14, 2022 at 2:41:45 PM CDT

To: mthom2114@gmail.com

Subject: Well Done

Board of Directors and all Volunteers
Never Forgotten Honor Flight

In three words—you nailed it! It was my honor to be invited to join the Honor Flight on June 6. The experience was over the top for the veterans, and I suspect, for the guardians too. I served in the U.S. Army between 1968 and 1971. It was over 45 years later before anyone ever said to me “thank you for your service.” From this old vet’s perspective, your mission is spot on. Some eight or nine years ago, I spoke at the Sunday evening pre-flight dinner and then joined family members for the welcome home on Monday night. I was very impressed last week to see how the program has grown and developed. No detail was left to chance. There must have been 40 volunteers working the pre-flight dinner and the welcome home ceremony. A big thank you to all of them. I always thought I had a rather good eye for organizing a project, but clearly there is much I could learn from the volunteers of the Never Forgotten Honor Flight.

If I may, I would like to offer three suggestions. You may want to consider inviting Lt. General Scott Berrier to be a speaker at the pre-flight dinner. He now heads the Defense Intelligence Agency, the most prestigious job of any three-star general across all the armed services. He still has family in central Wisconsin and received his commission through the ROTC program at UWSP. My next suggestion might be logistically challenging. I loved the “mail call” on the flight home. It was great getting notes for students and teachers thanking us for our service. If a student included the name of his or her school, I wrote them back. I also thought how nice it would be to include notes from family members. A son or daughter might be able to write message they would find difficult to convey in person. Perhaps you might be able to reach out to the family through the emergency contact information. Lastly, I would suggest assuring all veterans understand they can nominate their son or daughter to be their guardian on the flight.

Well done everyone!

Bernie L. Patterson
Chancellor Emeritus
University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point