

Senior Master Sergeant James F. Roney distinguished himself by outstanding service to the United States of America, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Air National Guard during a career spanning the years 1944 to 1987.

Born 24 May 1927 in Philadelphia, Sergeant Toney begin his military career by enlisting in the U.S. Army during World War II. As an infantryman, he served in the Italian theater until the cessation of hostilities, and remained in Italy as a member of the Army of Occupation until 1947, when he returned to the United States. At the outbreak of the Korean War, he was a member of the Army Reserve and attained the rank of sergeant first class.

In 1965, he joined the Pennsylvania Air National Guard, serving first as a food services specialist, then later retraining into the security police career field in the 111th Air Transport Group, later to become the 111th Tactical Air Support Group, based at Willow Grove Naval Air Station.

Sergeant Roney proved so proficient in his security duties that he soon became the full-time Security Flight Superintendent. Over a seventeen-year period, he applied his extensive experience and leadership skills to the direction of the security force, recruited the most promising candidates, and brought out the best in each individual airman and noncommissioned officer under his supervision. His expertise, enhanced as a member of the Philadelphia Police Department, brought his unit to the highest level of professional performance, and its members were always among the first to volunteer for difficult of challenging missions, whether at home, during annual field training or on overseas deployments.

In 1972, when Hurricane Agnes brought an unprecedented level of devastation to Pennsylvania, Sergeant Roney's leadership skills were called into play when his security force was needed to save military and civilian lives and secure resources. Quickly rallying his troops, he and his flight traveled to Harrisburg Airport, where rising river tides posed a threat to military assets. Upon arrival, they joined in the effort to aggressively fight back flood waters, then remained to aid in the clean-up effort when the crisis ended. Without Sergeant Roney's prompt action, and the direction of his subordinates, the initial damage caused by the flood would have been significantly worse, and the eventual return to normal airport operations would have been seriously delayed.

Sergeant Roney's long and honorable service is best remembered for the caring and optimistic service he brought to the 111th Security Police Flight during his tenure. His ability to mentor new members, his concern with the quality of each recruit, and his unflagging dedication to mission accomplishment, no matter what the task, marked him as one of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard's truly "legendary" Non-Commissioned Officers.

The singularly distinctive accomplishments of Senior master Sergeant James F. Roney during a lifetime of service to others, reflect great credit upon himself, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Air National Guard, and therefore warrant his induction into the Pennsylvania Air National Guard Hall of Fame.