

Senior Master Sergeant Peter J. Volpe is inducted into the Pennsylvania Air National Guard Hall of Fame in recognition of his outstanding accomplishments and contributions to the Pennsylvania Air National Guard, as demonstrated by 63 years of service to his country, his state and his community.

Sergeant Volpe's military career commenced with his enlistment in the United States Army Air Corps in 1940. During World War II, he served as an integral member of the team that opened the air base at Gandor Air Field, Newfoundland, establishing a submarine patrol base. Upon returning stateside, Sergeant Volpe served as a mechanic maintaining P-36 and P-37 aircraft, as well as the prototype YFM-1 Airacuda, push-propeller plane until his separation at the conclusion of the war. Of his greatest contributions prior to separation from active duty were his in-depth knowledge, testing, and development of the aircraft Full Panel Systems.

In 1949, Sergeant Volpe, looking to return to military service, visited the Philadelphia location of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard. When the operations officer learned of his extensive knowledge and experience of Full Panel Systems, he was recruited immediately and assigned as the Simulator Training Supervisor with ANT-18 Link Trainers. In 1952, Sergeant Volpe was mobilized as a Pennsylvania Guardsman and sent to Spokane, Washington to support the Korean War effort. Sergeant Volpe continued to serve as operations supervisor through both the Korean and Vietnam Wars, and his technical expertise was instrumental in guiding the 111th Airlift Group through five highly successful aircraft conversions.

In 1962, the unit converted to C-97 aircraft, while simultaneously relocating to e Willow Grove Naval Air Station from the Philadelphia International Airport. In 1968, despite the fact that that the unit's C-97's deployed frequently to Southeast Asia, the media reported that C-97's were destined for retirement and the 111th Airlift Group would be disbanded. Finding the news to disband the oldest flying unit most disturbing, Sergeant Volpe initiated contacts with local congressional and senatorial leaders to show the incredibly significant value of the 111th along with the unit's history and numerous contributions to national security. In addition, Sergeant Volpe organized and coordinated a highly successful letter writing campaign, which resulted in thousands of letter pouring into Capitol Hill Offices. Sergeant Volpe also organized the first Pennsylvania Air National Guard congressional visit to Washington, D.C. and personally met with U.S. Senator Richard Schweiker, who was well aware of the high volume of letters of support for the 111th Airlift Group. Only hours later, Sergeant Volpe was informed by Senator Schweiker that the 111th would be receiving the O2-A aircraft the following year.

Sergeant Volpe retired as a military member from the 111th Tactical Air Support Group in 1982 at 60 years of age. He ultimately saw the 111th through ten aircraft conversions and two wars. He still is serving the Pennsylvania Air National Guard, the 111th Fighter Wing, as well as other uniformed military service members today. Over the past twenty years, Sergeant Volpe continued to keep contact with congressional and senatorial leaders on issues that are important to Pennsylvania National Guard members and veterans. He continues to act as an Air Reserve consultant for retired military personnel, working at least one day per week at Willow Grove Air Reserve Station assisting veterans of all services.

Sergeant Volpe's service and dedication to his nation, his state, and his community reflect the highest traditions of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard. The distinctive accomplishments of Senior Master Sergeant Volpe reflect great credit upon himself, the Commonwealth of

Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Air National Guard and warrant his induction into the Pennsylvania Air National Guard Hall of Fame.