

National

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Press Release

HALL OF FAME

2019

Mr Odell Young

Odell Young has been an integral part of Philadelphia Chapter #1 of the National Montford Point Marine Association (NMPMA) Inc. for the past 10 years. He is the son of one of America's first African American Marines, the Montford Point Marines (MPM).

Odell has served as the Chapter Quartermaster ensuring all members were outfitted with the proper uniform items so we looked professional when interacting with the public. Currently, Odell serves as Chapter Sergeant at Arms, ensuring good order and discipline are followed during our meetings and events.

Odell has been instrumental in the success and revitalization of the Philadelphia Chapter. He has attended every Spring Council and National Convention since he joined the Association and has provided excellent logistical support to the MPM's involved in a movie project. Often times at the National Conventions Odell has filled in for and at times, acted as the National Sergeant at Arms ensuring good order and discipline during the meetings.

Odell also serves on the Chapter Care and Comfort Committee, frequently calling and checking in on MPM's and visiting them in local hospitals and nursing homes. Odell has also served as the watch of the caskets at many funeral services of MPM's. The Chapter currently has two Montford Point Marines living in nursing facilities in New Jersey and Odell is a constant visitor and checks on their well-being.

Since 2012, when President Barrack Obama signed a bill into law awarding the Nation's first African American Marines the Congressional Gold Medal, Odell has co-presided over dozens of the replica Congressional Gold Medal Ceremonies in the greater New Jersey and Philadelphia areas, often times bringing with him an elaborate display of artifacts and information for these ceremonies.

Odell travels with a plethora of information, handouts, and articles when he visits churches and other civic events to help tell their story. Additionally,

he has attended many events and funerals on behalf of the Chapter President. He is often the first to arrive to set up events and in most cases is last to leave.

In 2014 Odell traveled to New York City to attend the burial of Past National President Gene Doughty. Odell arrived to greet the National President and his entourage as they arrived and ensured they were properly seated for service. Additionally, in 2016 Odell traveled to Jacksonville, North Carolina to not only attend our 51st National Convention but to assist our partners from Dark Frames Production in conducting on camera interviews of Montford Point Marines for the movie "Black Boots". Odell was not required to attend either events and was not reimbursed for his travel or lodging. He has done this repeatedly over the last 10 years.

Odell has established liaison with the ship Captain of the USNS L Montford Point (T-ESD-1), often sending memorabilia that is on permanent display aboard this great vessel. He communicates regularly with the Captain keeping the National Public Relations Officer informed, who in turns shares this information as part of his annual report to the Association.

Finally, Odell played an instrumental role in coordinating with the Past Auxiliary National Vice President, Catrina Upshaw and the daughter of one of Philadelphia's deceased Montford Point Marines, Dr. Diane Turner, to have an Auxiliary reinstated within the Philadelphia's Chapter that his Odell's wife, Maria, plays a significant role in.

Odell is a very unassuming member who simply wants to help further the goals of the Association in any capacity. He is not one to seek recognition, but goes about his work with the Montford Point Marines out of an abundance of respect and humility.

Because of his commitment to service, Odell was inducted into the NMPMA Inc. Hall of Fame.

