

Daniel M. Ortiz

Daniel Ortiz entered into the U.S. Army in May of 1990 as an Infantry soldier. Upon completion of basic and advanced training in the mechanized Bradley Fighting Vehicle, Private Ortiz was assigned to the 24th Infantry Division from Ft. Stewart, Georgia and assigned to support Operation Desert Shield in the defense of Saudi Arabia. As the conflict in the Gulf region worsened, Operation Desert Storm took place and the 24th launched an assault deep into Iraqi territory systematically annihilating air bases and units of the elite Republican Guard. Because of their swift victory, Private First Class Ortiz returned to the United States and joined in with many others in participating in Welcome Home parades in Washington DC and New York City. Awards accumulated during his enlistment include the Combat Infantryman Badge, National Defense, Liberation of Kuwait, South West Asia Service, 2 Army Achievement medals, and the Presidential Unit award. He also completed a Combat Life Saver course in which he learned valuable medical skills, which could someday come in handy in an emergency situation.

In May of 1993, Specialist Ortiz was honorably discharged from the military and immediately joined the American Legion. Being one of the youngest members to join, his fellow comrades in arms from Wars and conflicts past welcomed him. His enthusiasm and willingness to participate attracted the attention of District Officers of the American Legion who appointed him to such positions as District Aerospace Chairman and member of the Executive Committee. He also served as commander of the Eugene A. Obregon Post 804 in East Los Angeles and still remains active there.

As his knowledge of veterans organizations grew, so did his affiliations with various organizations. Mr. Ortiz became a life member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and joined others to including; Disabled American Veterans, AMVETS, American GI Forum, Military Order of the Cootie, his Division Association, and more...

Active in the VFW, he quickly rose through the ranks of elected offices to the position of commander of the Don Pio Pico Post 4696 in East Los Angeles. From there he went on through the level of District Commander serving 2 terms representing the Greater Los Angeles area. As one of 25 District Commanders, Dan represented the thousands of veterans that reside in the Los Angeles area. He was employed at the VFW state headquarters in Sacramento as their Public Affairs Officer (PAO) and Editor of the State newspaper, "The California Veteran", which has a circulation of over 125,000. As PAO, he dealt with media issues, fielded questions from reporters, and created news advisories. Other duties of his included State Legislative Chairman and he served on the National Security Committee.

Dan's interest in legislation stemmed from his political activism in his community and led to him being hired by a State Senator who ran and was elected to the U.S. Congress. Here Dan learned the intricacies of our legislative process and how to effectively lobby for support of veterans issues. He has participated in numerous activities and focus groups pertaining to Veterans Affairs and is very involved in community activities. Among the numerous committees and advisories he has served on is the Department of Veterans Affairs Education Advisory Committee appointed by Secretary Togo West in February 2000.

Mr. Ortiz currently resides in Whittier, California and is employed by the Veterans of Foreign Wars as the Department Service Director for California. He is accredited to present claims before the Department of Veterans Affairs and has done so for the past 10 years. Dan manages 4 offices in major metropolitan areas that represent veterans and their dependents in need of assistance filing claims for compensation, pension and other benefits.