



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY HUMAN RESOURCES COMMAND
1600 SPEARHEAD DIVISION AVENUE, DEPARTMENT 450
FORT KNOX, KY 40122-5405

February 13, 2018

Casualty and Mortuary Affairs

Ms. Donna (Hatt) Ellis
1797 Lyndhurst Way
Haslett, MI 48840

Dear Ms. Ellis:

Thank you for your inquiry to add your father's name, SSG Melvin Lewis Hatt, to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall (VVMW). I am truly sorry for your loss.

According to DoDI 1300.18, for inclusion on the VVMW, a veteran's death must have been the result of, or an aftermath of, wounds received in the defined combat area of Vietnam as outlined in Executive Order 11216. Eligibility also includes those who died from injuries received enroute to, or returning from a direct combat mission or combat support mission to bomb, strafe, or perform surveillance of targets within the defined combat area.

Regrettably, although your father's Flying Tigers flight was enroute to a combat area, the flight itself was not enroute to or returning from a direct combat mission. The flight was a personnel transport flight enroute to Vietnam and does not meet the criteria. This by no means takes away the great contributions the Soldiers made to the United States Army and the Nation; and there is a means to recognize their sacrifice.

If a loved one is not eligible to have their name placed on the VVMW, there is the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) program called "In Memory." VVMF's In Memory program honors those who died as a result of the Vietnam War, but whose deaths do not fit the Department of Defense criteria for inclusion on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. For more information about the In Memory Day ceremony, visit the VVMF website at www.vvmf.org. For a copy of the In Memory application, download the online version or contact VVMF at 202-393-0090 or e-mail at vvmf@vvmf.org.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Ms. Tonika Butler at 502-613-8280.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cheryl L. Martinez", is written over a large, light-colored scribble or mark.

Cheryl L. Martinez
Colonel, U.S. Army
Chief, Casualty and Mortuary
Affairs Operations Division