



TOWN OF HAMDEN

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Memorial Day Shared

**History and Current Events Come Alive At Hamden Veterans Awareness Day at
Quinnipiac University Friday, May 25th**

More than 450 high school and middle school students and 100 veterans with visual displays of their service experiences will share in the Veterans Awareness Day events at Quinnipiac University's Athletic Center (main campus) on Friday, May 25th starting at 10:00AM until 1:00PM. The annual event builds on the increased awareness of the Memorial Day weekend to enhance students' understanding of the freedoms we often take for granted.

This year, CDR. Gabrielle McGrath, Assistant Commandant of Cadets at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, will speak to the students about her experiences in the U. S, Coast Guard. Commander McGrath received her commission in 1996 and has a Master of Science degree from University of Rhode Island. CT Veterans Affairs Commissioner Linda Schwartz, a Vietnam veteran, and others will also speak on the importance of remembering those who served and continue to defend the freedoms we share.

“Veterans Awareness Day is a great opportunity for students and veterans to discuss one-on-one, and learn what has made this nation great,” said Abner Oakes, Chairman of the Hamden Veterans Commission. “Veterans bring exhibits and memorabilia of their time in the service and the students really enjoy the interaction.” In addition to veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf, there will be exhibits from the Civil War and many groups that support veterans. The Hamden Veterans Awareness Day was conceived by Daniel Levy, a Coast Guard veteran and middle school Principal, and has always been about speaking WITH students, not at them.

If the displays don’t prompt interaction with the students, new ‘Scavenger Hunt’ booklets will get things started. Each student has a copy and the questions require an observant eye and thoughtful inquiries to fill out the pages. This year’s booklets include questions about current events in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as living history details from earlier conflicts. There are many new exhibits and surprises this year both inside the Athletic Center and outside in the nearby ball field. Now in its 12th year, Dan Levy noted “Quinnipiac University has been a great host and once again we look forward to filling the Athletic Center with a living example of the meaning of service.”

For more information, contact Abner Oakes at 203-215-4675, Dan Levy at 203-407-7131 or Guy Ortoleva at 203-843-2202. To see a video of a previous event posted on YouTube, go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_xOIrPvk2lQ.