DUTCHESS COUNTY VETERANS SERVICES DIRECTOR RECOGNIZED WITH STATEWIDE HONOR

LOCAL VETERANS HAVE NEW DISCOUNT WHEN USING FAVOR CARD

“We are grateful for the service and sacrifice of our local veterans and in return we will continue our work to serve them well,” said Dutchess County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro this morning. County Executive Molinaro and Dutchess County Clerk Brad Kendall joined Division of Veterans Services Director Nelson Eddy Rivera to announce a new county parking discount for FAVOR card holders and a special statewide honor recognizing Mr. Rivera’s work with local veterans. The announcements were made as part of a special event for veterans to sign up for VA medical benefits and the Dutchess County F.A.V.O.R. card as well as visit the VA Hudson Valley Health Care Mobile Clinic vehicle which was on site for the event.

Nelson Eddy Rivera was honored as the 2012 Service Officer of the Year by the American Legion - Department of New York. Mr. Rivera was recognized for outstanding professional proficiency, superior advocacy skills and personal initiative that embodies the high standards of an accredited representative of the American Legion. The award was presented to Mr. Rivera last week at the American Legion’s 94th Annual Convention in Rochester, NY.
County Executive Molinaro said, “Nelson Eddy Rivera’s passion for serving our veterans is evident in everything he does. He works tirelessly to get veterans the benefits they are entitled to and is a strong advocate for veterans needs locally as well as the state and national federal level. It is a pleasure to see his work and dedication with this recognition as Service Officer of the Year.”

Mr. Rivera was recognized for his outreach to veterans and their families in order to provide them advocacy and counseling to ensure they receive benefits granted by law for their service to our country. Mr. Rivera’s outreach efforts have included the Memorial Day “Illuminate the Walkway” event, coordinating the annual Dutchess County Veterans Appreciation Day held in November as well as local forums on various veterans’ issues. He serves on a wide range of committees and organizations to ensure veterans’ voices are heard on the local, state and federal levels.

In a letter supporting Nelson Rivera for the American Legion honor, the 727th Military Police Family Readiness Group’s Lead Volunteer Susan Stabell wrote, “Whenever Mr. Rivera is called upon, he answers with sincerity, compassion and an understanding of heart that only a “true servant’s heart” can display.”

Mr. Rivera said, “It is a truly an honor to be recognized by America’s largest veterans organization. My heartfelt thanks to my terrific staff, who join me every day to give their all to serve our country’s veterans and their families, I share this honor with them. Our goal is simple – to serve our veterans in grateful appreciation for all they sacrificed to protect and serve our country.”

County Executive Molinaro also announced a new discount offering for the Dutchess County FAVOR card with Dutchess County Clerk Brad Kendall. Starting today (July 27th), the County will provide up to 1 hour free parking to any Veteran doing business at the County Office building and utilize the County parking lot next door. To receive this benefit the veteran will have to show their FAVOR discount card to the parking lot attendant when exiting the parking lot.

The FAVOR (Find & Assist Veteran of Record) Discount Program is offered through the Dutchess County Clerk’s Office. FAVOR cards are issued to qualified and honorably discharged veterans who
served actively in the US military and who were discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. The FAVOR card entitles the veterans to discounts at local businesses throughout the county. Since County Clerk Brad Kendall launched the FAVOR program in March 2011, nearly 2,200 veterans have signed up for the card to receive discounts at more than 140 local businesses.

Dutchess County Clerk Brad Kendall said, “We are appreciative of the strong support of the business community for the FAVOR program and glad that Dutchess County will join offering another benefit for veterans.”

Complete information about the FAVOR card and how to sign up for it is available at: http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us/CountyGov/Departments/CountyClerk/19397.htm

Veterans can qualify for the FAVOR discount card by bringing their Full-time Active Duty Separation Papers to the Dutchess County Division of Veterans Services along with a picture ID to complete the paperwork.

For more information about Dutchess County Veterans Services, visit dutchessny.gov or call 486-2060.

# # #