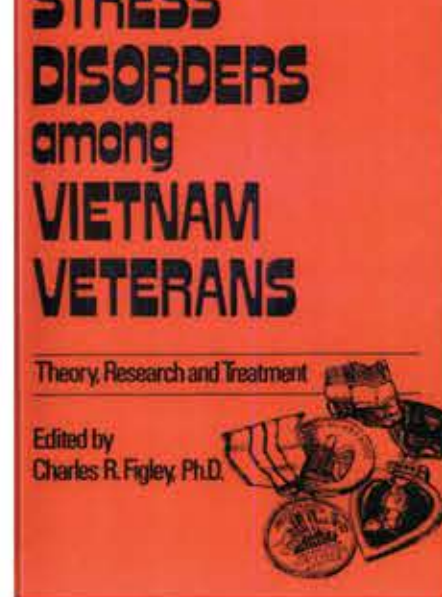
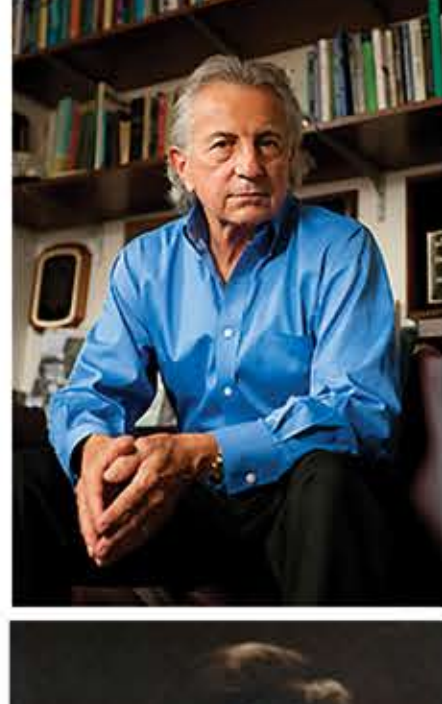




AWARD RECIPIENTS FOR VVA BANQUET

Charles Figley



Charles Figley, a former Marine who served in the Vietnam War and went on to become a pioneering researcher in the field of Vietnam veterans and post-traumatic stress disorder, will receive the VVA Excellence in the Sciences Award at the Saturday night Awards Banquet.

After joining the Marine Corps out of high school, Professor Figley served in Vietnam as a corporal, voluntarily working with Vietnamese children during his free time. He graduated from the University of Hawaii with a degree in human development in 1970. After earning graduate degrees from Penn State (an MS in 1971 and a Ph. D. in 1974 PhD), he joined the faculty of Purdue University's department of child development and family studies.

In 1977 he established the Family Research Institute, and in 1978 wrote Stress Disorders Among Vietnam Veterans, which helped recognize PTSD as a psychological condition for the first time. Professor Figley co-founded the Society for Traumatic Stress Studies and the online journal Traumatology. He has published more than 200 scholarly works, including twenty books and 114 refereed journal articles focusing primarily on stress and resiliency of individuals, families, and communities. In 2004 Professor Figley was awarded a senior Fulbright Research Fellowship to conduct research in Kuwait.

A former Professor in the College of Social Work at Florida State University, Professor Figley today is the Paul Henry Kurzweg Distinguished Chair and director of the Tulane Traumatology Institute at Tulane University in New Orleans



Henry Threadgill

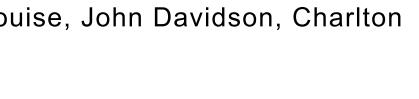
Henry Threadgill, the renowned jazz composer and musician, will receive the VVA Excellence in the Arts Award at the Saturday night Awards Banquet. Threadgill, the winner of the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for Music, joined the Army in 1966 and served a one-year tour of duty in Vietnam. Hailed by The New York Times as "perhaps the most important jazz composer of his generation," Threadgill studied at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, majoring in composition along with piano and flute.

After receiving his honorable discharge in 1968, he went on to a long and distinguished musical career. He has been composer in residence at the University of California, Berkeley and the Atlantic Center of the Arts. As a bandleader, he has fronted many groups including Air, the Sextett, Very Very Circus, the twenty-piece Society Situation Dance Band, Make a Move, and his current group, Zooid. He has released thirty critically acclaimed albums.

Henry Threadgill's awards include a Guggenheim Fellowship, a 2009 Aaron Copland Award, Down Beat Magazine's International Jazz Critics Poll Best Composer Awards in 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991 and 1995 and the Jazz Journalists Association Composer of the Year Award in 2002. In 2015, Threadgill was honored with a two-day festival at the Harlem Stage in New York City, an all-star collection of musicians performed his works.



Liz Kelley



Liz Kelley started dancing at the age of 3 in Kansas City. At the age of 7, her professional career began. Before she was 17, she had worked with Ethel Merman, Carol Channing, Dom DeLouise, John Davidson, Charlton Heston, and Arthur Godfrey.

At 14, she was youngest member of the Corps De Ballet at Starlight Theatre in Kansas City. Liz devoted herself to ballet, jazz, and modern dance.

At age 17, she moved West and realized her dream: she performed three solos with her idol, Gene Kelly, in his Las Vegas show. This caught the eye of the producer of the Dean Martin Show, who hired her for his singing and dancing entourage, the Goldiggers. Besides performing on his show, the group toured the world and had their own television series. Miss Kelley worked with Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis, Jr., Charles Nelson Riley, Goldie Hawn, Vincent Price, Jimmy Stewart, Sonny and Cher, Barbara Streisand, Ernest Borgnine, Jimmy Durante and many other stars.

Entertaining the troops with Bob Hope in Vietnam in 1970, was a deeply moving and life changing experience for Liz.

While touring and performing, she trained under several teachers in the U.S. and Europe. She started her own teaching career in Los Angeles in 1974 and, four years later, returned to Kansas City to teach at the Westport Ballet Company, American Dance Center and the Jewish Community Center. In 1984, Mz. Liz opened Dance Studio 1 - Liz Kelley.



Sheila Mann



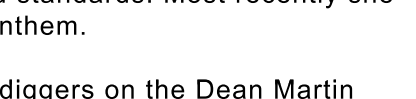
At the age of 11 Sheila Mann joined the "The Broadway Showoffs" and sang and danced her way through the Catskill Mountains in New York. In 1968 she auditioned to become one of the Goldiggers on the Dean Martin Show. She began appearing as a Goldigger during the 1969 Summer Series and performed with Gene Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Lou Rawls, Connie Stevens, Dean Martin ,and many others.

She took part in the 1970 "Around the World with Bob Hope" USO tour, which included performing in Vietnam. That tour also included a dress rehearsal for President Nixon and guests at the White House. In 1970 while working with Gene Kelly in Las Vegas Sheila met the man who would become her husband (a 1968-69 Vietnam War veteran) and left show business for the shoe business.

Still, while raising two children, she starred in the Cincinnati Music Theater production of "Irene" and performed Fanny Brice in "Funny Girl" with the St. James Players of Cincinnati. She also has done many charity benefits and industrial shows. Her favorite pastime today is being with her three grandchildren.



Marilyn O'Leary



A native of Houston, Marilyn Faye O'Leary, grew up singing in church choirs. She then went on to a long career as a singer, performing opera, operetta, Broadway shows, and Big Band standards. Most recently she has specialized in singing the National Anthem.

She joined the singing and dancing Goldiggers on the Dean Martin Show, just before they took part in the Bob Hope 1970 USO Christmas Tour, entertaining American troops around the globe, including in Vietnam. She appeared with Donald O'Connor in the national tour of "Show Boat," following a stint as the principal singer in the MGM Las Vegas Spectacular "Hallelujah Hollywood." She also has sung with the Los Angeles and San Diego operas, the Houston Symphony, and the Las Vegas Philharmonic.

Marlyn O'Leary lives in Las Vegas and remains active, teaching voice and recently served as a celebrity judge at the Mrs. United States and Cinderella Scholarship Pageants. She won the Ms. Senior Nevada America Pageant in 2010.

