



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
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PRESS RELEASE

Voices of Veterans: Corporal Max Vasquez Shares His Story of Service in the U.S. Marine Corps

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AUSTIN — Today, Texas Land Commissioner and Veterans Land Board (VLB) Chairwoman Dawn Buckingham, M.D., is proud to introduce the next installment of the series highlighting the VLB's Voices of Veterans oral history program. In this episode, we hear the story of Corporal Max Vasquez of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Vasquez was born in Laredo in 1948, and his family moved to Corpus Christi when he was 12. At just 17, Vasquez enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps, saying, "There was no doubt in my mind I had to do my duty for this country. My country called, I answered." During specialty training, he became a machine gunner and was quickly sent to fight in the Vietnam War.

Vasquez fought in the Battle of Dai Do, Con Thien, Khe Sanh, and Quang Tri. He spoke at length about his experiences during the Battle of Dai Do, for which he was awarded the first three of four total Purple Hearts. He and his fellow Marines were surrounded by the enemy and fought for five days and six nights before reinforcements arrived.



VOICES OF VETERANS

name Vasquez, Max		
military branch Marines	rank Corporal	conflict Vietnam
date interviewed 02/23/2017		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> interview available on voicesofveterans.org

Max Vasquez served as a corporal in the U.S. Marine Corps from May 1967 to March 1970. He was deployed to Vietnam and fought in the Battle of Dai Do, Con Thien, Khe Sanh and Quang Tri. Mr. Vasquez received four purple hearts after being wounded in action. Mr. Vasquez was a relay runner in the 1996 Olympics and carried the torch through Houston, Texas. He rides with the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association Capitol City Chapter out of Austin, Texas.



"I remember standing up. I seen two guys get up, then another one, another one, until we all looked, and there was only 13 of us standing up. And I could not believe that everybody was dead." Even after reinforcements arrived, Vasquez and his men wanted to stay and help. "We didn't want to leave. We had a mission. We felt an obligation to our brothers."

Vasquez's legs were injured by shrapnel, and he was sent by helicopter to get treatment. However, the helicopter was shot down, and he instead traveled by riverboat to receive medical attention. After surgery, he was put in the recovery ward.

“That was hard because I could hear nothing but moaning and groaning all night because there was guys there that lost limbs that were really hurt. That was a nightmare.”



VOICES OF VETERANS

VLB CHAIRWOMAN, DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

Vasquez revealed that he was affected by PTS and Agent Orange but still does all he can to support Veterans in his community and beyond. He was a torch carrier for the 1996 Olympics and ran the torch for two miles through Houston, Texas. Vasquez said,

"Doing that, in my mind, [was] for my brothers. Everything I do, everything I do today is for them."



VOICES OF VETERANS

VLB CHAIRWOMAN, DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

He also became a Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association member, participating in escorts, attending conventions, and supporting community projects and fundraisers. Vasquez spoke about his father, an immigrant, and his mother, who came from an

Apache reservation, being able to give him a good life, saying, "That's why I continue doing this for this country because it gave me and my family so much."

To listen to Corporal Max Vasquez tell his story, click the button below:

[Corporal Max Vasquez's Story](#)

Veterans can email VoicesofVeterans@glo.texas.gov to tell their stories. Please note that the Veteran must be a resident of Texas at the time of their interview.

Voices of Veterans is a state agency's first Veteran oral history program. It records the stories of Texas Veterans through their time in service and after returning home from combat.

The VLB records interviews with veterans over the phone or in person. Their interviews are then permanently archived in the Office of Veterans Records at the GLO, where they join the historical documents of other Texas heroes such as Sam Houston, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and William Barret Travis.

Veterans' interviews are also available to researchers, historians, genealogists, and the public. These precious records inspire future generations and remind us of our Veterans' sacrifices.

To listen to the over 500 archived stories of Veterans documented through the GLO's Voices of Veterans oral history program, click the button below:

[Voices of Veterans](#)