

Christopher G. Gomes, has been selected as The 2017 Southeastern Massachusetts Veteran of the Year

(New Bedford, Mass., September 8, 2017) – The Board of Directors of the Southeastern Massachusetts Veterans Housing Program, Inc., better known locally as the Veterans Transition House (VTH), is pleased to announce the selection of United States Army Sergeant Christopher Gomes (ret), as the 2017 Southeastern Massachusetts Veteran of the Year. Mr. Gomes is the 22nd recipient of this award.

Christopher G. Gomes was born on July 11, 1985 in New Bedford, Massachusetts. He attended Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School, graduating in June 2003.

Mr. Gomes enlisted in the United States Army, attending basic training and AIT in Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri from August 2003 until January 2004 where he received his orders for his permanent duty station in Grafenwohr, Germany with the 535th Engineer Company, 94th Engineer Battalion. In January 2005, he deployed with his unit to Mosul, Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom until January 2006.

In October 2007, Mr. Gomes' unit was called upon again to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, this time to Baghdad, Iraq as part of the "surge". During this deployment, Mr. Gomes was a team leader, acted as the squad leader, was in charge of eight soldiers, was one of the chemical sergeants for the company and was in charge of the squad's security team. In the 13th month of the deployment, Mr. Gomes' armored vehicle was struck by multiple Explosive Formed Projectiles, or EFP's.

A medevac transported him from the blast site to the Baghdad Combat Support Hospital where doctors had to amputate his right leg and stabilize multiple other injuries. Once he was stable he again was transported from Baghdad, Iraq to Balad, Iraq to Landstuhl, Germany and finally on November 2, 2008 to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.

While at Walter Reed Mr. Gomes underwent more than twelve surgeries in less than two months. He also learned how to walk again with the use of a prosthetic leg and hundreds of hours of physical therapy. On July 19, 2010, Mr. Gomes was officially retired as a Sergeant from

the United States Army with six years and eleven months and was given an Honorable Discharge.

Mr. Gomes was retired with:

- Purple Heart
- Three Army Commendation Medals
- Two Army Good Conduct Medals
- Army Achievement Medal
- National Defense Service Medal
- Army Service Ribbon
- Two Overseas Service Ribbons
- Combat Action Badge
- Iraqi Campaign Medal with three Campaign Stars
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Non-Commissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon

In August 2010, Mr. Gomes was hired as the Veterans Agent for the City of New Bedford. In October 2010, he was appointed by the Mayor and City Council as the Director of Veterans Services for New Bedford. Mr. Gomes belongs to the Military Order of the Purple Heart. He served on the Board of Directors for the Freetown VFW Post #6643 and still serves as the post Service Officer. In October 2016, Mr. Gomes was named the Veterans Service Officer of the year by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Veterans Services.

Christopher Gomes will receive the 2017 Southeastern Massachusetts Veteran of the Year Award at a special dinner presentation to be held at Whites of Westport, at 6:00 p.m., on November 9, 2017.