

**Remarks of Mayor Noam Bramson**  
**Veterans Day – 2009**

On this occasion, we pay tribute, as a community and as a nation, to all who have worn the uniform. And although we reserve our highest and most solemn respect for those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to country, we affirm also that every veteran – whether they served in war or in peace, whether injured or whole – has earned a place of special honor.

The debt we owe is not bounded by our shores. It extends to free nations throughout the world. None should doubt that the bravery of America's fighting men and women has been the principal defense of human rights against tyranny, enabling more people in more places to think and act and worship as they choose, free from fear and violence.

These are the grand achievements that fill history books and are rightly the principal object of our admiration. Made only more powerful by the modesty with which they are so often recounted by those whose actions are heroic in every sense of the word.

But let us today not overlook the quieter achievements that also uplift places like New Rochelle. For it is not only on the battlefield and in uniform that our veterans serve.

Think of the veterans we know personally. Think of the example they set. Responsibility, decency, love of country and respect for her values, fierce loyalty to friends and to cause. They are the heart of our civic life. Can we imagine New Rochelle without Bill and John and Peter and Gene and all the others who grace us with their presence.

My point is that the contributions of veterans are not confined to the past – they are with us now, here, in every child that aspires to a life of duty and honor, in every adult that is reminded of their blessings, in all who seek a model of how we can best do our own part to uphold the common good.

On behalf of a grateful city that is better and stronger for all they have done and all they still do, I extend my thanks to the veterans among us, and express our shared determination that we should prove worthy of their deeds.

May God bless the United States of the America and all who believe in freedom and justice.