



2019 Veterans Day Benefit Gala

2019 Honorary Gala Chairman Major General (R) Arnold Punaro



Arnold Punaro is chief executive officer of The Punaro Group, LLC, a Washington-based firm he founded in 2010 specializing in federal budget and market analysis, business strategy and capture, acquisition due diligence, government relations, communications, sensitive operations, business risk analysis and compliance, and crisis management. He consults for a broad array of Fortune 100 companies and has been recognized by Defense News as one of the 100 most influential individuals in U.S. Defense. He also leads Punaro Capital, LLC, a firm specializing in national security investments, and Punaro Press, LLC, a company that specializes in national security publications.

In November 2015, General Punaro completed a four-year term, first as Vice-Chairman, then as Chairman of the National Defense Industrial Association, the country's largest defense industry association with over 1,600 corporate and 85,000 individual members. As NDIA Chairman Emeritus, he served as Chair of the Nominating and Governance Committee from 2015 to 2018. He began a new two-year term as Vice-Chairman in October 2018 and will serve again as Chairman beginning in October 2020.

A retired U.S. Marine Corps Major General, he served as the Director of the Marine Corps Reserve, Deputy Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command (Mobilization), and for three years as the Commanding General of the 4th Marine Division.

Other assignments were Commanding General, Marine Corps Mobilization Command, and Deputy Commander, Marine Forces Reserve. In December 1990, he was mobilized for Operation Desert Shield. In December 1993, he completed a tour of active duty as Commander of Joint Task Force Provide Promise (Forward) in the former Yugoslavia. He was mobilized for a third time in May 2003 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. He served on active duty as an Infantry Platoon Commander in Vietnam where he was awarded the Bronze Star for valor and the Purple Heart.

He is on the Board of Advisors for the Center for a New American Security, Senior Adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and a visiting scholar at the Bipartisan Policy Center.



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He serves on the non-profit boards of the University of Georgia's School of Public and International Affairs, the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University, and the Georgia Institute of Technology Sam Nunn School of International Affairs.

General Punaro is the recipient of numerous recognitions including the Secretary of Defense "Medal for Distinguished Public Service" and two awards of the Secretary of Defense "Medal for Exceptional Public Service." He received the Marine Corps League's "Iron Mike Award" in 1993 for "exceptionally outstanding service" and "unwavering commitment" for over 20 years to "ensuring a strong national defense." He has received the Air Force Association's "Exceptional Service Award," the National Guard "Minuteman Award," the Army's "Meritorious Public Service Medal," and the Secretary of the Army "Public Service Award", the Reserve Officers Association's "Minuteman of the Year Award", the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation "Commandants' Award," the NDIA Forrestal Award for industry leadership, and was the recipient of the SAIC's "Founders Award" and two special CEO awards.

In 2017, General Punaro was awarded The London Medal for Distinguished Service from Comfort for America's Uniformed Services. He has over 20 military awards and decorations to include the Distinguished Service Medal as well as numerous civic awards.

He has a Masters of Arts degree from the University of Georgia and a Masters of Arts degree from Georgetown University, the latter in national security studies. He was on the Adjunct Faculty of the Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University for ten years where he taught an annual graduate level course entitled "National Security Decision Making."

He is the author of the book, *On War and Politics: The Battlefield Inside Washington's Beltway*, that was published by the Naval Institute Press in October 2016.