

POMPANO BEACH (CBS4) – It was a ceremony Vietnam Veteran William Mackey welcomed, but not one that he asked for.

Congressman Allen West honored Mackey with the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal and the Vietnam Campaign Ribbon for his six years serving in the Navy, including as a navigator on the USS Lowry. This is personal for Congressman West.

“I know one simple thing. He wore a uniform in the United States of America just as I did, so we’re warrior brothers. We’re comrades in arms, and as well he served in Vietnam which is where my older brother served so he’s a brother to my older brother as well,” said Congressman West.

Mackey says he only reached out to the Congressman to inquire about Veteran’s Affairs, never asking for recognition. But he got it anyway.

“This was a total surprise to me because I had no knowledge of it until the Congressman’s office contacted me,” said Mackey.

He’s thrilled to have the symbolic rewards for a tough time in his life, and in our nation’s history.

“Years ago when I was released from active duty, there were no ceremonies...I earned them, I’m proud to wear them. I’m proud to have served my country,” said Mackey.

Congressman West feels honoring veterans who’ve sacrificed so much is a key part of his job.

“We must continue to honor and respect the service of our veterans.”

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