



First Batch of Military Banners Flying

Every time she walks or drives along historic D Street, Perris resident Allison Lugo looks up and sees a banner of her career military husband looking down on her.

The portrait of Army Sgt. First Class Jaime Lugo provides shows her that the City of Perris has not forgotten him or his decades of service to America. The portrait of Jaime Lugo is one of 22 recently hung along D Street between Fourth Street and San Jacinto Boulevard as part of the City's military banner program.

"It's important to me to know that the City cares about its veterans, is mindful of their service and has not lost track of them," Allison Lugo said.

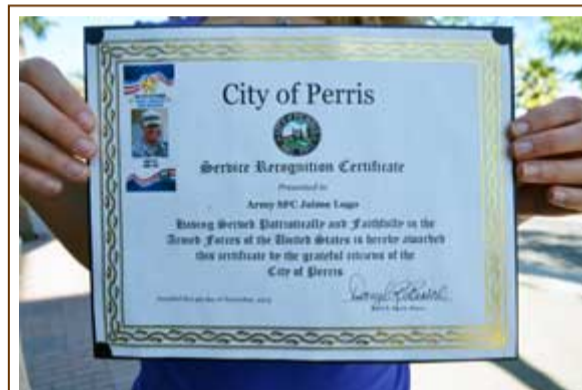
Lugo said her husband has been deployed seven times since 2001 for periods from nine to 18 months. Currently he is stationed in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. She said the loneliness that creeps in during overseas deployments is eased by the City's concern.

"When I drive by and see his banner, I see and feel a sense of community support," she said. "When I'm alone it makes me feel better."



Perris resident Allison Lugo stands in front of a banner of her husband, Army First Sgt. Jaime Lugo, 42, who has completed seven tours of overseas duty in the last 12 years

The Perris City Council, noting the City's military history includes veterans from the Civil War, recently created the free Military Banner



The City of Perris presented a "Service Recognition Certificate" to each of the 22 residents pictured as part of the Military Banner Program recently authorized by the City Council.

Program to honor residents serving in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard and National Guard. The two-foot by five-foot vinyl posters featuring high-resolutions images of the honorees were hung on light poles this month.

"We are proud to honor our veterans who have given us so much," said Perris Mayor Daryl Busch.

City Clerk Nancy Salazar walked D Street shortly after work crews finished putting up the banners. Her stepson, Joseph Michael Salazar, 23, is a Navy corpsman who spent a year treating combat casualties in Afghanistan and is now deployed to Guantanamo Bay.

"We are beyond proud of him," Salazar said. "He is our hero."

Salazar said her stepson plans to enroll in college and study medicine when his enlistment in the Navy runs out next year.

Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Yarbrough watched as the banners were installed on D Street between Fourth Street and San Jacinto Boulevard. For him, the moment also was personal as well as professional. His twins—son Schyler and daughter Andrea, both 21—were among those residents honored with banners.

"It's hard to describe how I feel right now," Yarbrough said. "It's really hard to express the pride I feel in my children and for all the other residents that we are honoring. We can never do enough for our veterans. They all take the same oath and are all prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice to defend our freedoms."

Yarbrough's son recently was deployed to the Korean peninsula with other members of his tank unit when tensions between communist North Korea and democratic South Korea escalated. His daughter has served in Korea and is now deployed to Germany as part of a information technology unit.

"This recognition is long overdue," he said.

The complete list of Perris residents honored in the initial phase of the Military Banner program includes: Army PFC Jacob James Garcia; Army PFC Joshua Joseph Garcia; Air Force AFC Joseph G. Posthuma; National Guard Melissa Marie Casillas; Army SFC Jaime Lugo; Marine Corps LCPL David Torres; Air Force SSGT Justen Rodriguez; Navy CPO Robert Valadez; Army PV2 Dominique Durant Nogues; Navy William Anthony Morgan; Army PFC Armando Montoya; National Guard PFC Cecilia Ruiz; Navy April Marie Verdin; Navy Christopher A Verdin; Marine Corps CPL David Sosa; Army SGT Raymond J. Cuellar; Army SPC Holly Lee Larkin; Air Force David Garcia; Navy corpsman Joseph Michael Salazar; Army PFC Ashley Nicole Cooper; Marine Corps LCPL Schyler Yarbrough and Army SGT Andrea Yarbrough.

Perris officials hope to install a second batch of banners early next year. Applications are available at Perris City Hall, 135 North D Street or they can be downloaded from the [City website](#). For more information, contact Veronica Arana at 951-943-5003, ext. 227.



Perris City Clerk Nancy Salazar stands in front of a portrait of her stepson, Navy corpsman Joseph Michael Salazar, whom she described as "our hero."



Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Yarbrough is pictured in front of a portrait of his son, Marine Lance CPL Schyler, 21, a tanker.