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Fighting Back: Heinz History Center to Host Vietnam Veteran and Steelers Legend Rocky Bleier

- Veterans receive FREE admission to this evening of story-sharing in honor of the new edition of Bleier's "Fighting Back" -

PITTSBURGH, June 18, 2019 – The Senator John Heinz History Center – “The Smithsonian’s Home in Pittsburgh” – will host Vietnam War veteran and legendary Pittsburgh Steelers running back **Rocky Bleier** for a special evening program on **Monday, July 8 at 7 p.m.**

Presented in conjunction with the History Center’s *The Vietnam War: 1945-1975* exhibition and the new edition of Bleier’s popular book “Fighting Back,” the program will explore the story of Pittsburgh’s best-known Vietnam War veteran.

Drafted twice in 1968 – first by the Pittsburgh Steelers, then by the U.S. Army – Bleier was seriously wounded by rifle and grenade fire while serving in Vietnam. After earning a Bronze Star and returning home, Bleier worked himself from the injured reserve, to the taxi squad, to the active roster, and then, in 1974, to a starting position in the Steelers’ backfield. He helped the franchise win four Super Bowl championships in the 1970s.

During the program at the History Center, Bleier will be joined by friends and associates to share inspiring stories from throughout his career:

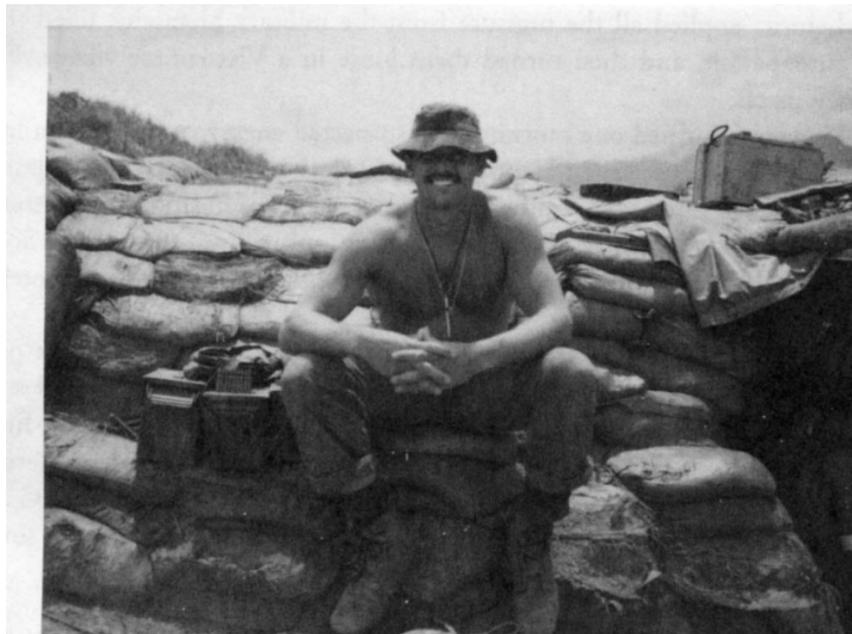
- **Larry Richert**, host of KDKA Radio Morning News;
- **John Banaszak**, former Marine and three-time Super Bowl champion defensive end for the Pittsburgh Steelers;
- **Jon Kolb**, four-time Super Bowl champion, former Pittsburgh Steelers offensive lineman (1969-1981), and a personal trainer who works extensively with veterans injured in the line of duty;
- **Dr. Ben Stahl**, President and CEO of the Veterans Leadership Program of Western Pennsylvania; and
- **Samuel W Black**, director, African American Program at the Heinz History Center and lead curator for *The Vietnam War: 1945-1975* exhibit.

Following the program, Bleier will sign copies of “Fighting Back,” which will be available for purchase.

In addition, attendees will have after-hours access to ***The Vietnam War: 1945-1975*** exhibition. The powerful exhibit tells the deeply personal stories of the men and women who were impacted by the war, from the home front to the front lines. Photos of Bleier in Vietnam, as well as his Bronze Star, are on display in the exhibit.

Admission to this program is \$15 for general admission and **FREE for veterans and active-duty service members**. To register, visit www.heinzhistorycenter.org/events.

The Senator John Heinz History Center, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and the largest history museum in Pennsylvania, presents American history with a Western Pennsylvania connection. The History Center and Sports Museum are located at 1212 Smallman Street in the city's Strip District, and are open every day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The History Center's museum system includes the Sports Museum; the Fort Pitt Museum in historic Point State Park; and Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village, a National Historic Landmark located in Avella, Pa. in Washington County. More information is available at www.heinzhistorycenter.org.



Drafted into the U.S. Army in 1968, Rocky Bleier was seriously wounded by rifle and grenade fire while serving in Vietnam. Bleier will share his inspiring story at the Heinz History Center on Monday, July 8.



After being seriously injured in Vietnam, Rocky Bleier went on to help the Pittsburgh Steelers win four Super Bowls in the 1970s. Bleier and friends will speak at the Heinz History Center on Monday, July 8. (Photo by Mike Fabus)

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