



### **Maurice Bridges Sr, Senior Master Sergeant, USAF, Retired Illinois Veterans of Foreign Wars State Commander**

Mr. Bridges served honorably in the United States Air Force from January 1973 to November 1978 as an aircraft mechanic specialist.

He also served in the Illinois National Guard, 126th Air Refueling Wing, from February 1979 to January 2006 for a combined 32 years and 11 months.

As a Desert Storm Veteran, He earned the Southwest Asia Service Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal. He has also been awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal with one Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster; the Air Force Achievement Medal with 2 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters; the Air Reserve Forces Meritorious Service Medal with two Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters and one Silver Oak Leaf Cluster; and the Nuclear Deterrence Operations Service Medal.

He filled all leadership positions at the Post level multiple times – Quartermaster and the full accession from Junior Vice Commander to Commander, where he earned All-State Post Commander honors. He achieved All-State and All-American honors as the District 14 Commander in 2018-2019. Mr. Bridges was appointed to the Department of Illinois Chief of Staff, Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms, and Convention Committee 3-year member. At the National level, he was named National Aide-de-Camp in 2016 and 2017, member of the Committee on National Security and Foreign Affairs in 2018, and most recently a member of the Committee on National Bylaws, Manual of Procedures and Ritual in 2021.

He's a Gold Legacy Life member of Scott VFW Post 4183, Belleville IL, He's been a member since 2001.

He has extensive leadership experience in volunteer roles beyond the VFW to include being a member of the American Legion, DAV, National Guard Association of IL (NGAI), St. Clair County Veterans Assistance Commission (VAC) and a sitting member on the Board of Directors for The Eagle's Nest of St. Clair County Men's Homeless Veterans Shelter.

He was awarded the State of Illinois Treasurer's Outstanding Commitment to Community Service Award in 2020. He was recognized as VFW Department of Illinois Member of the Year for year 2019-2020, Military Order of the Cootie and is a Life Member of the VFW National Home for Children.

He was elected as State Commander for the IL VFW during the 2024 State Convention held in Springfield, IL in June 2024.