

WALL OF HONOR INDUCTEE - JOHN S. WATTS



At the May 12, 2025 meeting of the Board of Selectmen, John S. Watts was unanimously selected to be inducted to the Ellington Wall of Honor. Submitted by his son Peter, the application included multiple letters of reference from individuals whose lives have been positively impacted by John over the years.

A retired educator, John's teaching extended outside of the classroom, advocating for civic education and acting as a champion for critical thinking and personal growth in his students.

His vision, hard work, and commitment contributed to a long-lasting legacy that lives on to this day.

A 35-year educator at Ellington High School, John taught American Government and Contemporary Issues, encouraging his students to be actively involved in their community. He was known for making his classroom content relevant. Students in his introductory class successfully campaigned for the USS *Nautilus* to be named the official state ship; then-Governor William O'Neill and former Governor John Dempsey attended a ceremonial signing at Ellington High School.

In addition to teaching, John served as a member of the Ellington Volunteer Ambulance Corps, earning Lifetime Membership status, and was the driving force behind the creation of Ellington Rescue Post 512, improving emergency medical responses in the community and inspiring many high school students to pursue careers in medicine, public safety, service, and volunteerism.

Those who knew John describe him as someone who "embodies what Ellington is all about...a true mentor and educator...an integral part of Ellington's identity...always went the extra mile for anyone he knew."

In addition to the hours he spent teaching and his service with EVAC, he served as a volunteer Auxiliary State Trooper and was a part of Ellington's Marine Patrol. He was also a Justice of the Peace, a Deputy Registrar of Voters, and coached track for Ellington High School for over 11 years. His dedication did not go unnoticed and he was the recipient of many awards and accolades, including the William H. Spurgeon Award from the Boy Scouts of America, the Mabel B. Avery Community Service Award, recognition from the American Red Cross, and the Ellington Friends of Education Award.

In the words of his son Peter, "John Watts embodies the values of service, compassion, and a steadfast commitment to education and community."

A formal induction ceremony was held on Saturday, September 6, 2025 at 4:00 pm at the Ellington Volunteer Ambulance Corps Building on Maple Street. The public was invited and encouraged to attend.