

## **Bio for Jeff Cantor**

Jeff Cantor is the founder & Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey State Veterans Chamber of Commerce which launched in November 2018. His goal is to improve the economic environment for veterans in the state and to build the infrastructure to create greater competitiveness and success for veteran business entities. Prior to that, Jeff served as the Lead for Veterans Economic Development for the State of New Jersey. He began that role in January 2018. In that role, he was tasked with looking at ways to support veterans either through meaningful employment or veteran business support & entrepreneurship, as well as look at ways to support formerly incarcerated veterans.

Jeff is also the President & Chief Executive officer of Lima Charlie Construction. This is a service-connected disabled veteran owned business and a small business entity whose headquarters is in Freehold, New Jersey. Lima Charlie Construction performs heavy construction including asphalt milling & paving, concrete, utility work, and all site work.

Jeff enlisted in the Army in 1985 as a Private First Class and through determination became commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Infantry. He held four military occupational specialties in Infantry, All-Source Intelligence, Imagery Intelligence, and Civil Affairs. He served in various units both in active duty and in the Army Reserves. Jeff has served in dozens of countries around the world on six continents. He recently retired in 2017 at the rank of Colonel (O-6) in the Army Reserve.

In 2003, Jeff was the Bravo Company Commander for the 404<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion. It was in that role that he had the privilege to serve in Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was the Civil Affairs Commander for the city of Kirkuk, Iraq, which consisted of over 1.2 million people of different ethnic backgrounds. Jeff's Company was the first Civil Affairs unit to be infiltrated into Iraq. After the invasion, Jeff was responsible for bringing order to Kirkuk. One of his first roles was to set up a provincial government post Saddam Hussein. Some of his many accomplishments from Iraq included, designing the Kirkuk provincial government, creating the Kirkuk employment center, which placed approximately 8,500 people in jobs, repairing and reopening over 285 schools, and training the Kirkuk City Police Force and establishing a police academy and training program.

In 2009, Jeff was once again called upon to serve his country in the Global War on Terror. Jeff was mobilized and deployed to Bagram, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and became the Chief of Reconstruction and Development for the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division and CJTF-82, Regional Command- East. Jeff also played a major role as a Governance Team Chief, trying to build competencies in local and provincial governments. He was focused on Eastern Afghanistan and worked with 14 provinces including 5 provinces on the border with Pakistan. Jeff built the first of its kind, inter-agency platform which consisted of U.S. military, Department of State, USAID, USDA, Department of Energy, and multinational military officers to provide an efficient way to solve complex problems.

Jeff Cantor currently serves as a Councilman in Marlboro, New Jersey (County of Monmouth) and has served on council since November 2004 after his return from Iraq with the US Army. As a Councilman, he has worked with two administrations on improving governance in his hometown of Marlboro.

Jeff started the Marlboro Sunshine Fund in 2011 and the Veterans Foundation of America in 2015 to raise money for veterans causes. He was able to raise over a hundred thousand dollars to help veterans impacted by Superstorm Sandy, those that have been hit by hard times, affected by poor health and mobility, and given money to family members of special operators that have been killed in the line of duty.