



Rolland V. Heiser, Lieutenant General, U.S.A. (Ret.)

April 25, 1925 - June 16, 2016

Rolland V. Heiser, Lieutenant General, U.S.A. (Ret.) was born on April 25, 1925 in Columbus, Ohio, to Rudolph and Helen Heiser. He grew up on the North Shore of Chicago and attended elementary school in Wilmette and Kenilworth, Illinois. He also attended Western Military Academy, Alton, Illinois (1939-1943).

General Heiser retired from the U.S. Army on November 1, 1978 in the grade of Lieutenant General (3 stars) after 32 1/2 years of military service. He Graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1947 and received a Master of Science degree in International Affairs from The George Washington University in 1965. He attended the Army Command and Staff College 1958 and the Naval War College 1965.

Lieutenant General Heiser's military service included: Command at every level from platoon through division, Service with the Army staff and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Command of the 14th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Germany, Command of the 1st Armored Division in Germany, Service as Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, Europe in Heidelberg, Germany, Service as Chief of Staff, U.S. European Command in Stuttgart, Germany, Foreign service included Europe (16 years), Korea (18 months), and Vietnam (3 years). Served one year in WWII. While on active duty in Korea in 1954 he established the Korean Military Academy. He also established the Vietnamese Defense College in

1968.

He was the President of the New College Foundation of Sarasota, FL from June 11, 1979 until April 25, 2003 and helped raise corporate assets from \$1.9 million to over \$32 million while funding academic excellence at New College. He also established an endowment of over \$30 million and brought over \$100 million to the New College Campus during the period 1980-2003. He played a major role with the 2001 legislature to make New College of Florida an independent institution within the State University System. After retiring as President of New College Foundation he remained on the foundation board and was currently a Trustee Emeritus.

General Heiser was a former member of the Florida Board of Governors (2003 -2005), Chairman of Gateway 2000 (1994-2000) a community service organization dedicated to improving North Tamiami Trail in Sarasota. He also played significant role in bringing the Sarasota Bay Club, the Renaissance, the Ritz - Carlton Hotel Sarasota, and the Broadway Promenade to Sarasota. General Heiser was also a former member and director of the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce (1980-2003), Sarasota County Committee for Economic Development (1980-2003), Director and past President (three times), Retired Officers Club of Sarasota, Director at Coast Federal Savings and Loan Association and Coast Bank (1985-1993), Member of Advisory Board, SunTrust Bank, Gulf Coast (1994-1999), Chairman of Suncoast Offshore Grand Prix Festival (1986-1989 and 1991), Director of Sarasota French Film Festival (1989-1991) and Director of Florida Winefest and Auction (1991-1993).

Rolland is survived by his wife of 67 years, Gwenne K. Heiser. He is also survived by his two daughters, Helen Sanford and her husband Timothy Sanford of Fairfax Station, VA and Rolland's daughter Charlene Wolff, and her husband Phillip Wolff of Sarasota, FL. Rolland has three grandchildren,

Kimberly Frederickson and Gregg Sanford of Madison Wisconsin and Catherine Wolff of Sarasota Fl. He was also blessed with six great grandchildren, Hannah Sanford, Gretchen Sanford, Sylvia Sanford, Timothy Frederickson, Gwenne Frederickson and Luke Frederickson. Rolland is also survived by his sister Marilou Rose of Rogers, Arkansas and his brother in law and sister in law Maj. General Gordon and Pat Duquemin of San Antonio, TX.

A Funeral Services will be held at Toale Brothers Colonial Chapel on Thursday June 23, 2016 at 10:00 am with burial to follow at 12:30 pm in Sarasota National Cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to New College Foundation.

Tribute Wall

LP

“ Good morning,
I most likely came into possession of your watch engraved with the date May 30, 1943. R.V. Heiser. Thanks to this find, I'm discovering a wonderful story.

leonardo Poli - August 20, 2025 at 05:43 AM

LD

“ *General Heiser was my mentor and friend, I will miss him greatly.*

Leo Demski - July 19, 2023 at 07:18 PM

BB

“ *I met Gen. Heiser during my time in student government. Thank you General Heiser for all you have done for New College. May God rest your soul.*

Benjamin Brown - October 05, 2016 at 12:00 AM

WR

“ *Sincere condolences on Ron's passing. In addition to his long and distinguished military career, he was a true giant to those of us who knew him during his time at the New College Foundation. Ron took on a financially foundering institution and placed it on solid ground. Each and every New College alum owes Ron Heiser our deepest gratitude and sincere thanks for his tireless efforts. Thank you Ron, you will not be forgotten and you will be greatly missed.*

William Rosenberg - October 05, 2016 at 12:00 AM

SG

“ *Gen Heiser has been so important in shaping the future of New College. His steady guidance and confidence were beacons in dark times. His spirit is threaded throughout the college. His presence will be missed.*

Sandra Gilchrist - June 23, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ *My love and thoughts are with the Heiser and Wolff families. Ron's contributions to our country and education can never be equaled. It was an honor to know him.*

Jeff Cianci - June 21, 2016 at 12:00 AM

PM

“ *General Heiser, a true friend and champion of New College, will be greatly missed.*

Patrick McDonald - June 21, 2016 at 12:00 AM

MF

“ *Ron Heiser made a difference in the life of many. God Bless him and his entire family.*

Mark Famiglio - June 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM