



4 1/2 East Main Street
Tipp City, OH 45371
Ph: 937-669-2040
FAX: 937-405-1957



Tara Dixon-Engel, Vice President of AVI

As an elementary student in the 1960s, Tara Dixon-Engel delighted in sketching pictures of GIs being welcomed home from Vietnam. Although such celebrations were few and far between in that era, those sentiments would ultimately define Dixon-Engel's life. Today, as national co-chairman for *Operation Welcome Home* and Vice President of the American Veterans Institute, she dedicates most of her waking hours to planning veterans celebrations, working with elderly and disabled vets seeking VA benefits, developing educational curriculum that teaches young people about the contributions of veterans, raising money and awareness for veterans causes and facilities, and delivering speeches and presentations on veterans issues and related topics. She has been interviewed by numerous national media outlets, from the Associated Press to G. Gordon Liddy. The energetic veterans advocate is currently working to establish the American Veterans Hall of Honor and the American Veterans Research Library in Auburn, IN. She is coordinating plans for the 2008 *Operation Welcome Home* celebration in Indiana, in addition to developing a leadership program for young people that will be tied to Hall of Honor inductees.

In 2004 Dixon-Engel co-authored the critically acclaimed Vietnam memoir *Naked In Da Nang*, with Mike Jackson. The authors have also completed *The Wright Brothers: First in Flight* (Sterling Publishing 2007) and *Neil Armstrong: One Giant Leap for Mankind* (Sterling Publishing, 2008) and have just finished *Welcome Home Grandpa* and *My Neighbor is a Caterpillar*, the first two books in the "Embracing Freedom" series for young people. Dixon-Engel was featured in seasons two, three and four of the PBS/Discovery television series "*Legends of Air Power*." She has also written speeches for actors Cliff Robertson, Harrison Ford, and Dennis Quaid.

From 2002-2006 she sat on the blue-ribbon panel of the Astronaut Hall of Fame in Titusville, FL and helped select the next class of astronauts for induction into the AHOF. In 2005, she earned a Telly Award, a Gold Aurora Award and a Crystal Communicator Award for her writing of *D-Day: A Crowning Glory*, a video tribute to America's D-Day veterans. In 2006, Dixon-Engel received another Telly Award, a platinum "Best of Show" Aurora Award and a Crystal Communicator award for her writing and narration of *Vietnam: A Nation Remembers*, a tribute to Vietnam veterans that was featured at the Las Vegas *Operation Welcome Home* celebration.

Before devoting her life to veterans' issues, the author spent over a decade in print journalism as an award-winning reporter and editor. She later served as an adjunct professor in the fine arts department at Sinclair College, where she wrote the curriculum for the college's Electronic Publishing program. After working in corporate marketing and communications, she joined the National Aviation Hall of Fame (NAHF) in 2000 as Director of Research and Strategic Planning. During her career at the NAHF, Ms. Dixon-Engel oversaw the installation of the facility's permanent exhibits, and wrote/researched the narrative content of the exhibit walls. She took the NAHF newsletter from a four-page, two-color document to "*Heroes & Legends*" magazine, an award-winning, full-color membership publication. She also designed the structure and foundation for the NAHF's *SkyReach* education program. Dixon-Engel was instrumental in enhancing the annual Enshrinement Ceremony and in writing "television quality" video presentations on each enshrinee. She also developed the programming for the highly successful *Pioneers of Flight Homecoming* in 2003.

"Serving Those Who Served With Honor"

www.AmericanVeteransInstitute.org & www.NationalOWH.org