

Matthew Mendoza
Anthony Quispe
Period: 1

Leocadio Fierro
Army
2 Years in Service
9 Years Interviewed

Leocadio Fierro

On March 18, 2016, we were able to have the opportunity to interview a veteran of the United States Army for the annual event at our school, "King High Remembers." The event was truly an amazing experience as we were told real stories from people who experienced what life was really like serving in the United States military. We were lucky enough to interview Leocadio Fierro, a veteran of the Army who served in Vietnam.

Leocadio Fierro was born on August 12, 1944 in Chihuahua, Mexico. He moved to the United States of America when he was just 10 years old. Though he attended school as a third grader in Mexico, he was held back and took some kindergarten classes to learn English better.

He was drafted into the Army when he was fresh out of high school at age 21 in 1965. He claimed Boot Camp was not as tough as he anticipated because he spent most of his time working out and staying in physical shape before he was drafted. He felt the same way about acclimating to life in the Army, saying "It's not too hard, it's just rolling with the punches." He was placed in the 4th Infantry Division, 2nd Brigade in Vietnam where he stayed for one year from 1966 to 1967. One day, during a Vietcong attack, while Fierro was loading ammunition the fingers on his hand were sliced off by the shaft, which earned him a Purple Heart. He was honorably discharged on

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October 3, 1971. He received a National Defense Medal and an Army Commendation Medal along with his Purple Heart. We learned that his whole battery only had one casualty that he can remember and Fierro described him as one of the nicest lieutenants in the unit.

On his last day of service, on July 21, 1967, Fierro remembers feeling really sick and when he was given his last plate of food (which consisted of a large steak and a pile of French fries) he couldn't even manage to eat it due to his lack of appetite. When he returned home, he was really happy to see all of his family again, but he felt a little out of place. He was not used to life at home after his years of service so it took some time to adapt again. He found work for a railroad company in Santa Fe, New Mexico and also as an Inspector for the Union.

Leocadio Fierro is now 71 years old and lives in Riverside, California. He has been married for 45 years to Esther Vasquez-Fierro and together they have two daughters, who both have two children of their own. One of Fierro's daughters is a Correctional Officer for the State of California and his other works in Pharmaceuticals. He now enjoys living the retired life and relaxing with his family. This was Fierro's ninth year participating at King High Remembers and we were glad to have the opportunity to hear his amazing story.