

# Edward Johnson Memorial Endowed Scholarship

**Type:** Endowed

**Amount:** Varies depending upon investments according to the spending policy

**# Offered:** One yearly

**Deadline:** Refer to Allen College Institutional Scholarship Application

**Established:** 2023

**Special Criteria:** Nursing student



Edward Johnson received a heart procedure and subsequent cardiac rehab at Allen Hospital in 1980. Edward never forgot what Allen staff did for him and when he retired wanted to give back. In 2001 he began volunteering with this wife Sallie. When Sallie passed, Edward continued volunteering three or four days a week.

Edward volunteered beyond his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. He became ill and passed September 15, 2021 at Allen.

Ed is remembered as a religious, caring, generous man with the ability to raise the spirits of everyone he came in contact with. He was a Navy war veteran, dedicated to service of country, community, church, family and friends. See page 2 for an article from the *Waterloo Courier* about Edward's service.

The scholarship in Edward's name is dedicated to the positive impact he had on Allen Hospital and its staff, patients and volunteers.



**Allen College**  
**UnityPoint Health**

# EDDIE JOHNSON



## Waterloo sailor saw major action in Korea

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Edward "Eddie" Johnson, 88, saw more action during the Korea conflict than he'd like to talk about, but the seven battle stars he received for his service speak for themselves.

During three tours from 1947 to 1955, the U.S. Navy veteran received and sent heavy fire aboard an aircraft carrier and a destroyer.

While aboard the USS John A. Bole, a support ship for bombardments, Johnson was involved in the infamous Inchon invasion in September 1950 on the west coast of Korea. The area was especially difficult for allied forces because of a narrow port and dangerous tides.

"Inchon was the worst one," he said during an interview on June 10 with the Groot Museum. "It was rough" because of the drastic loss of ground forces.

Johnson loaded and fired magazines on a gunnery deck. He remembered hearing news reports of U.S. and allied casualties on the ground, but numbers were not reported.

"I think the 1st Cavalry in the 3rd Marines took the biggest hit at Inchon," he said. "Once the troops go over ... we don't bombard any longer because our job is finished. Then we get the sad news about the troops that went over and that's about it. There's no assistance on ground troops."

But Johnson maintained his position. "You can't get scared. You're at war. There's no time for fear. You have an enemy," he said.

Johnson grew up in Waterloo and attended Waterloo schools before he moved to Chicago and graduated high school. His father signed a special contract for him to sign up for the U.S. Navy in 1947 as a 17-year-old. Two of his brothers also had served in the Navy.

Johnson completed basic training in San Diego and was assigned sea duty on the USS Antietam, a large aircraft carrier, with nearly 3,700 aboard, including about 75 African Americans. "It was like being in a city," he said.

While segregation was still active during the time, Johnson said discrimination was not a problem on a ship that size.

"[It's] the way it was. I got food and medical just like everyone else. We were all just there to do our jobs," he said.



META HEMENWAY-FORBES, COURIER STAFF

Korean War veteran Edward Johnson greets retired U.S. Army Gen. David Cole at the World War II Memorial in Washington D.C., in September 2018.

Johnson was later transferred to a much smaller ship, the USS Bole destroyer, with about 315 sailors, including 15 African Americans, when the war began.

"We were a small part of the Navy, and we got called up to go to a job, so you just had to accept it," he said. "You've got to respect one another. You've got to use a little more wisdom on the boat than you did aboard the carrier. The carrier you could relax a little bit on it."

The USS Bole joined a large task force of 77 of battleships, cruise ships, and destroyers. The USS Bole was in the blockade of Wonsan Harbor in North Korea. Later, the ship was sent to the South China Sea where some say Army Gen. Douglas MacArthur was attempting to lure China into the war before he was fired by President Harry S. Truman.

"It got about routine because we were on a six-month rotation plan," he said, noting that rule didn't necessarily apply to the soldiers. Johnson served for nine months on two stints and 11 months on another.

Johnson was in Korea on Nov. 27, 1950, when Chinese forces surprised the United States' X Corps, a corps that fought under MacArthur in World War II at the Chosin Reservoir area. A brutal 17-day battle in freezing weather followed, and between Nov. 27 and Dec. 13, more than 30,000 United Nations Command troops, later named the "The Chosin Few," were encircled and attacked by about 120,000 Chinese troops.

The USS Bole was ordered to assist, but it was too late. All of the men had been killed.

"They were gone. They were using them for target practice up there," Johnson said.

Johnson also was in Korea when the armistice was officially declared on July 27, 1953. But the USS Bole was under command to continue firing for three more days.

"It wasn't making much sense," Johnson said. "I think we left their country whole in a sense ... we didn't just go over to destroy the country, (although) certain

parts of it we did."

Johnson remained in the Navy for a year and a half after the war was over before residing in Los Angeles after he was discharged.

"Back then the guys getting out of the service were going for civil service jobs, postal workers, school custodians, etc.," he said.

He later returned to Waterloo where he held several jobs, including as a metal spinner at Holland Manufacturing, John Deere, and Viking Pump, from which he eventually retired.

He credits much of discipline to the U.S. Navy.

"I think it helped out greatly. I think as far as discipline, as a young person, you need that, so I'm glad that I got that experience, but I'm glad it's over," he said.

Johnson's message to young men and women who don't yet know what direction they're going after high school: "Go into the military and find out what kind of help is needed to make it in the world today," he said. "It will help you greatly."

# Edward Johnson Obituary

1930-2021

**February 5, 1930-September 15, 2021**

WATERLOO—Edward Johnson, 91, of Waterloo, IA died Wednesday, September 15 at Allen Hospital. Born February 5, 1930 in Waterloo, son of Clyde Johnson Sr. and Ethel Johnson Wright, he married Mildred Louise Ross in Los Angeles, CA; they later divorced. He then married Sallie Francine President Houston in Waterloo. She preceded him in death.

Survived by: two sons, Raymond Johnson of Los Angeles and Antonio Johnson of Denver, CO; a daughter, Anita Clark and a sister, Adrienne Damme, both of Waterloo; 12 grandchildren; and a host of great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews and friends.

Preceded in death by: his parents; three sons, Richard Johnson, Philip Houston Sr. and Roderick Houston; a daughter, Linda Houston; two brothers, Clyde Johnson Jr. and Leo Johnson; and a sister, Alfreda Lodge.

Services: 11 a.m. Thursday, September 23 at Payne Memorial AME Church, with burial in the Garden of Memories, Garden of Gethsemane section, Lot 273, Space 1 with full military rites by Evansdale AMVETS Post #31 and the Navy Honor Guard. Visitation: 5-7 p.m. Wednesday at Sanders Funeral Service. Sanders Funeral Service is assisting the family