

# ‘Lightning in a Bottle’

## Studio No.VI brings home city’s first ever EMMY Award

The City of Novi’s video team – Studio No.VI – wasn’t even a year into its role when Vietnam War veteran Allen Bialek approached them to ask for help promoting his public speaking program.

Video Production Specialists Josh Buscher and Damon Parnell balked at first, telling Bialek there needed to be a tie to Novi for them to do anything. But as Veterans Day rolled around, the story started to take shape – Bialek could be Novi’s voice to thank veterans.

“At Veterans Day parades, the kids are more focused on the fire trucks and sirens. At veterans luncheons, it’s all us old guys and I don’t need to tell another veteran what it means. In schools, it’s a page in the history books. In museums, it’s all old artifacts,” Bialek said. “But the heart, reality and personal message is absent.”

Bialek’s story is not unlike many others in the 1960s, as he was just a couple weeks out of high school in 1965 when the draft notice from the United States Navy came.

“It was scary. Don’t let anyone ever tell you it’s not scary to go in the military, that they aren’t afraid. It matures you real quick,” he said.

He completed his basic training in Illinois, was stationed in Virginia and completed his four-year enlistment aboard the USS Cascade AD16.

“I wrote a blank check as many men and women did in the 241 years of our country. For me it was four years, and it was an honor and privilege for me to serve our country,” Bialek said. “Being a veteran is the greatest club you can belong to.”

When Buscher heard Bialek’s story he immediately knew they had something special. There were several interviews and a good amount of tears shed before “Veteran Showcase: Allen Bialek” was published on Novi’s cable and YouTube channels.

The piece was so good, Buscher thought, that he decided to enter it in the running for the 2017 Michigan EMMY Awards. A few months went by, and the Studio No.VI team received something via e-mail – a nomination in the “Military Program Feature/Segment” category from The National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences Michigan Chapter.

“I was awestruck,” he said. “I was happy enough with that. The EMMY

Nominated Studio No.VI’ was fine with me.”

The Studio No.VI piece was up against OU All-Access “The NCAA vs. Corporal Isiah Brock” produced by Good Problem Productions/Fox Sports Detroit. By name recognition alone, the Studio No.VI team would be considered the underdog, but the team wasn’t phased. They knew they had something great.

*The EMMY Awards took place June 10 at the Motor City Sound Board Theater (far left). Vietnam War veteran Allen Bialek (top right) is the subject of Novi’s Emmy Award-winning documentary. Novi’s winning team of Josh Buscher, Sheryl Walsh-Molloy and Damon Parnell (bottom right) with their Emmy’s.*



The EMMY Awards took place on June 10 at the Motor City Sound Board Theater, and the military category was about halfway through the program. When the presenters made the announcement, it wasn’t until they heard them say “Allen Bialek” that it became real.

“The whole point of the piece was to give Novi something to be proud of,” Buscher said. “When we shot the piece we

weren’t looking for an EMMY, we just wanted to make the best video we could. It was lightning in a bottle.”

For Bialek, it brought “legitimacy” to his efforts.

“Each of us has something to contribute and the many men and women who served and those who gave the ultimate sacrifice certainly did,” he said. “They needed a voice, and who better than another veteran.”

To watch “Veteran Showcase: Allen Bialek” and the other videos created by Studio No.VI, visit [YouTube.com/TheCityofNovi](https://www.youtube.com/TheCityofNovi).

