Edwin Abeya
U.S. Navy - Vietnam War Era

Edwin Abeya is originally from Sagada, Philippines - a remote mountain village. He joined the U.S. Navy with his brother, Fred, straight out of high school. He attended boot camp in San Diego in 1967 and after was sent to Steward School where he learned to cook. He was then sent to Midway Island where he became a medic apprentice at the dispensary. After Abeya was sent back to San Diego to attend the Hospital Corps School to become a hospital corpsman (medic).

While few were sent to Vietnam, Abeya was sent to Oakland Naval School for X-Ray school where he was top of his class. Almost every day the hospital received wounded sailors, soldiers, and airmen from Vietnam. Abeya remembers a day he was summoned to bring a portable x-ray machine to x-ray an injured servicemember. While waiting with the patient who had lost both his legs, he witnessed the joyful reunion between him and his parents and his girlfriend. This has become a vivid memory that he thinks about often.

As the Vietnam era was winding down, Abeya received his commission as a Medical Service Corps Officer in the Navy. In 1985, he was assigned to the Bethesda Naval Hospital - now Walter Reed National Medical Center. He was then assigned to the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery where he retired as Lieutenant Commander in 1992 in Bethesda. Abeya is the recipient of Navy Commendation Medal (2x), Navy Achievement Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation, Good Conduct Medal with two stars, Navy Expeditionary Medal, National Defense Service with Bronze Star, Humanitarian Service Medal, and Sea Service Ribbon.

He currently resides in Rockville.