



Congressional Medal of Honor Society

Press Kit

What is the Congressional Medal of Honor Society?

Chartered by Congress in 1958, the Congressional Medal of Honor Society's membership is comprised of those who wear the Medal of Honor, our nation's highest military award for valor. As individuals who have gone above and beyond the call of duty, the Medal of Honor Recipients are committed serving our country in peace as they did in war by championing the values of courage, sacrifice, integrity, commitment, patriotism, and citizenship.

As a nonprofit, 501(c)3, Society is dedicated to preserving the legacy of the Medal of Honor and its Recipients, inspiring America's youth and its Veterans, and supporting the Recipients as they connect with communities across the country. By serving, remembering, supporting, and honoring the sacrifice of the Recipients, by sharing the stories and values inherent in them, we understand the responsibility and potential within each one of us to impact the world.

What is the Medal of Honor?

The Medal of Honor is the United States' highest award for military valor in action. It is sometimes erroneously called the "Congressional Medal of Honor." Out of respect for those who currently wear the Medal, please use their preferred term of "Recipient," not "winner."

Criteria to award the Medal has changed since it was created and first awarded during the Civil War. Today, a valorous act must be during conflict and distinguish a service member "conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty." All recommendations must be investigated and approved all the way up the military command structure, ending with the United States President as the Commander-in-Chief.

By Federal Statute, recommendations for the Medal must be submitted within 3 years of the valorous act and the Medal must be presented within 5 years. Any submissions outside of this timeline require an Act of Congress to waive the time limits.

Medal of Honor Nomination and Process

The Department of Defense has rigorous standards for all military medals, including the Medal of Honor. The Congressional Medal of Honor Society is not involved in nominating, selecting, or awarding the Medal of Honor. Please contact the Department of Defense for more information on nominations and their processes.

National Medals with Similar Names

- Medal of Honor: The Medal of Honor is the highest award presented to American military members who have distinguished themselves by acts of valor in combat.
- Congressional Gold Medal: Bestowed by the United States Congress, this award is Congress' highest expression of national appreciation for distinguished achievements and contributions by individuals, groups, or institutions. It can be awarded for military, cultural, scientific, or civic actions. It can be awarded to anyone Congress deems worthy.
- Presidential Medal of Freedom: Awarded since 1963, this is bestowed by the President of the United States to recognize people who have made "an especially meritorious contributions to the security or national interests of the United States, world peace, cultural or other significant public or private endeavors."



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Society Impact

Education Initiatives

- Medal of Honor Character Development Program is a no-cost program that challenges the next generation of Americans to embrace the values of courage, sacrifice, integrity, commitment, patriotism, and citizenship.
 - Launched in 2009
 - Each lesson is designed by educators for educators and complement required studies.
 - Over 17,500 educators have been trained.
 - Over 75,000 digital curriculum kits have been distributed so far.
 - Training is available virtually or in-person.
- Scholarships and educational assistance to veterans and children of Medal of Honor Recipients.

Outreach Initiatives

- The Veterans Outreach Program partners with support agencies to target critical veterans' issues such as chemical dependency, civilian readjustment, and mental health.
- The Recipient Outreach Program places Recipients in front of audiences to serve as speakers and panelists on leadership, patriotism, integrity, and character-building.

Award Programs

- Citizen Honors Award is an annual, nation-wide program to locate and honor civilians who go above and beyond in courage or service to others.
 - Honorees are nominated by the public.
 - Finalists are selected by Medal of Honor Recipients.
 - The awards are presented at two major events during the year.
- Excellence in Character Education Award recognizes educators and their leadership in inspiring students to live by the Medal's values of courage, commitment, sacrifice, citizenship, integrity, and patriotism.
 - Ten educators have been recognized since the program began in 2017.
- Society Awards recognize individuals or organizations who promote and perpetuate the principles upon which our nation is founded; encourage the values of courage, commitment and selfless service; or who have demonstrated patriotism, valor and fidelity. All honorees are nominated by Medal of Honor Recipients.
 - Patriots Award – awarded since 1968; honorees include: David J. Mahoney (U.S. Secretary of Labor); Bob Hope (entertainer); Ronald W. Reagan (U.S. President); Gen. William C. Westmoreland; H. Ross Perot; George H. W. Bush (U.S. President); Gen. Colin Powell; Adm. Thad W. Allen (Commandant, USCG); Gen. Joseph Dunford; Morrill & Karen Worcester (Wreaths Across America); Gary Sinise (entertainer & philanthropist)
 - Distinguished Citizen Award – awarded since 1968; honorees include: Jeb Bush (Governor, Florida); Dave Stockton (golfer); Robert K. Kraft (Kraft Corporation); Susan Collins (U.S. Senator)
 - John R. "Tex" McCrary Award for Excellence in Journalism – awarded since 1997; honorees include: Bernard Shaw; Tom Brokaw; Paul Harvey; Timothy Russert; Joseph Galloway; Peggy Noonan; Judy Woodruff; Jake Tapper; Chris Wallace; Catherine Herridge
 - Bob Hope Award for Entertainment – awarded since 1997; honorees include: Stephen Ambrose (author); John C. McDermott (musician); Clint Eastwood (actor, director); Tom Selleck (actor); Bradley Cooper (actor, director); Jay Leno (entertainer); George Strait (musician)



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History & Preservation Programs

- Living History Project – records oral histories of the Medal of Honor Recipients for future generations. Their interviews are then pared down into shorter videos and shared via the Society website and the Character Development Program. Over 125 have been completed so far.
- Medal of Honor Museum, located at Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum, Mount Pleasant, SC
- Medal of Honor Archives & Library, co-located with the Medal of Honor Museum, serves as the memory and research center for the Medal of Honor and its Recipients.

Support Programs for Medal of Honor Recipients

- Healthcare Advice & Advocacy Program provides a dedicated, on-call resource to help Recipients and their families with health, medical, insurance, benefit, and life-care planning issues and questions.
- Travel & Logistics Coordination provides an on-call resource to help Recipients with travel and accommodation needs to facilitate outreach efforts.
- Educational assistance for Medal of Honor Recipients' children and scholarships for veterans.

Fact Sheet

The Medal of Honor & its Recipients

- More than 40 million men and women have served in America's armed forces; only slightly more than 3,500 have received the Medal of Honor.
- There are three designs of the Medal of Honor, one each for the Army, Navy and Air Force. (The Marine Corps and Coast Guard receive the Navy design.)
- For more Medal of Honor facts, see <https://www.cmoHS.org/medal/faqs>
- There are fewer than 70 Medal of Honor Recipients still alive today.
- Recipients speak in nearly 1,000 classrooms annually, inspiring America's youth.
- In 2020, despite the Covid-19 Pandemic, Recipients pivoted to digital platforms to deliver over 40 in-person programs to veterans' groups, ROTC units, and businesses under the Society's Veterans Outreach Program, reaching over 74,000 people.



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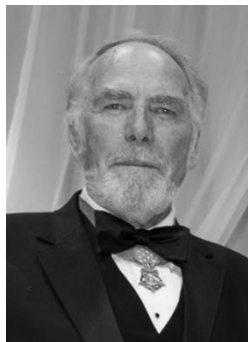
Leadership

The Society is governed by a board of Medal of Honor Recipients.

Board of Directors Executive Committee

President

Drew D. Dix



U.S. Army, Vietnam War
Chau Doc Province, Vietnam
January 31 – February 1, 1968

Presented the Medal of Honor by
President Lyndon Johnson on January 6, 1969.

Vice President

Robert M. Patterson



U.S. Army, Vietnam War
Near La Chu, Vietnam
May 6, 1968

Presented the Medal of Honor
by President Richard Nixon on
October 9, 1969.

Secretary

Charles C. Hagemeister



U.S. Army, Vietnam War
Binh Dinh Province, Vietnam
March 20, 1967

Presented the Medal of Honor
by President Lyndon Johnson on
May 14, 1968.

Treasurer

Kyle J. White



U.S. Army, War on Terrorism
(Afghanistan)
Nuristan Province, Afghanistan
November 9, 2007

Presented the Medal of Honor
by President Barack Obama on
May 13, 2014.

Immediate Past President

Thomas G. Kelley



U.S. Navy, Vietnam War
Ong Muong Canal, Kien Hoa
Province, Vietnam
June 16, 1969

Presented the Medal of Honor
by President Richard Nixon on
May 14, 1970.



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Leadership (continued)

First Regional Vice President

Britt K. Slabinski



U.S. Army, War on Terrorism
(Afghanistan)
Vicinity of Wanat Village, Kunar
Province, Afghanistan
July 13, 2008

Presented the Medal of Honor
by President Barack Obama on
July 21, 2014.

Second Regional Vice President

Michael E. Thornton



U.S. Navy, Vietnam War
Vietnam
October 31, 1972

Presented the Medal of Honor
by President Richard Nixon on
October 15, 1973.

Third Regional Vice President

Harold A. Fritz



U.S. Army, Vietnam War
Binh Long Province, Vietnam
January 11, 1969

Presented the Medal of Honor
by President Richard Nixon on
March 2, 1971.

Fourth Regional Vice President

Britt K. Slabinski



U.S. Navy, War on Terrorism
(Afghanistan)
Takur Ghar, Afghanistan
March 4, 2002

Presented the Medal of Honor
by President Donald Trump on
May 24, 2018.



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Images/Film

For images, please contact our Archives & Historical Collections at moharchives@cmohs.org.

Contact Information

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