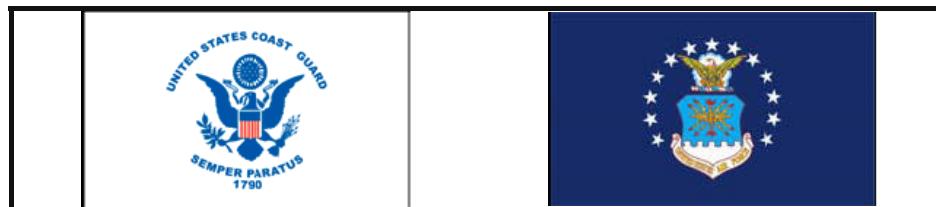


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## An Array of the Medals

### Hierarchy of Military Medals and Awards:

Our thanks to Joseph Brocato for his efforts to organize this hierarchy of military medals/awards:



### Military Medals:



Compiled by: Joseph E. Brocato  
 March 2011  
*Military Order of World Wars*  
**General Hoyt S. Vandenberg Chapter 213**  
*San Luis Obispo, California*

### Hierarchy of Medals

To honor the sacrifices and deeds of our men and women, our Military has developed a hierarchy of medals to reward all according to the heroic nature of their actions under extraordinary circumstances.

At the very top is the **Medal of Honor**.

Second in precedence to the **Medal of Honor**, the Armed Services awards the **Distinguished Service Cross (Army)**, the **Navy Cross (Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard)**, and the **Air Force Cross** to individuals who distinguish themselves by extraordinary heroism rising to a level below that required for the Medal of Honor.

The **Presidential Unit Citation** is awarded to Units that display the degree of heroism that would warrant award of the Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, or Air Force Cross to an individual. Below that level in descending order are: **Distinguished Service Medal**, **Silver Star**, **Valorous Unit Award**, **Distinguished Flying Cross**, **Air Medal**, **Soldiers Medal**, **Navy and Marine Corps Medal**, **Airman's Medal**, **Coast Guard Medal**, **Bronze Star** and **Purple Heart**.

**The Defense Superior Service Medal** and **The Legion of Merit** are typically awarded to Senior Military Officers. **The Legion of Merit** is also awarded to Military and Political figures of Foreign Governments.

#### Medal of Honor



Army



Navy  
Marine Corps  
Coast Guard



Air Force

Virtually every ethnic group is represented on the **Medal of Honor Recipients Rolls**.



In total, 3,471 *Medals of Honor* have been awarded to 3,452 different individuals. Nineteen men received a second award: 14 of these received two separate medals for two separate actions, and In WW I, five Marines received both the Navy and the Army *Medals of Honor* for the same action. 3,443 recipients are identified by name and 9 medals were awarded to unknown soldiers, all Army. The remains of the "Unknowns" interred in the *Tomb of the Unknown Soldier* have been awarded the *Medal of Honor*.

In total, since 1862, 621 had their medals presented posthumously. Since the beginning of World War II, 856 Medals have been awarded, 529 posthumously. Standards have been significantly tightened as a result of the 1916 review by the Military when 910 medals were rescinded; most awarded during the Civil War.

*Medals of Honor* have been awarded to individuals in virtually every military action since the Civil War; from the World Wars, Korea, and Vietnam, to relatively minor campaigns in Mexico, Haiti and the Dominican Republic. By Branch of Service, the figures (as of March 2011) are as follows:

<b>Recipients by Branch of Service</b>	
Army .....	2408
Navy .....	746
Marines .....	297
Air Force .....	17
Coast Guard .....	1



The correct title for the award often called the "Congressional Medal of Honor" is simply "*MEDAL OF HONOR*" and the men who have received it prefer to be called "*RECIPIENTS*" (of the award), not "winners". It is the only United States Military Award that is worn from a ribbon hung around the neck, and the only award presented "By the President in the Name of the Congress".



Arlington National   Normandy, France  
Medal of Honor Grave Markers

**As each recipient is honored in life  
the final resting place of *Medal of Honor Recipients* is also honored with distinction.**

#### Summary:

The *Medal of Honor* is the highest military decoration awarded by the United States government. It is bestowed by the President in the name of Congress on members of the United States Armed Forces who distinguish themselves through "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his or her life above and beyond the call of duty while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States." Due to the nature of its criteria, it is often awarded posthumously (more than half have been since 1941).

Members of all branches of the armed forces are eligible to receive the medal, and there are three versions (one for the Army, one for the Air Force, and one for the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard).

The *Medal of Honor* is bestowed upon an individual by the passing of a Joint Resolution in the Congress; and is then personally presented to the recipient or, in the case of posthumous awards, to next of kin, by the President of the United States, on behalf of the Congress, representing and recognizing the gratitude of the American people as a whole. Due to its honored status, the medal is afforded special protection under U.S. law.

The *Medal of Honor* is one of two military neck order awards issued by the United States and is the sole neck order awarded to members of the armed forces. (The *Commander's Degree of the Legion of Merit* is also a neck order but it is only authorized for issue to foreign dignitaries).

As the award citation includes the phrase "in the name of Congress", it is sometimes erroneously called the Congressional Medal of Honor; however, the official title is simply the *Medal of Honor*.

The great diversity you find in the ranks of *Medal of Honor Recipients* occurred only with the invisible hand of Lady Liberty; without the help of government, or diversity panels; it just happened, ordinary people exercising their free will and guided by our Founding Fathers' legacy of sacrifice, duty and honor.



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#### Distinguished Service Cross (DSC)

The Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) is the second highest military decoration that can be awarded to a member of the United States Army, for extreme gallantry and risk of life in actual combat with an armed enemy force. Actions that merit the Distinguished Service Cross must be of such a high degree to be above those required for all other U.S. combat decorations but not meeting the criteria for the *Medal of Honor*.

The Distinguished Service Cross is equivalent to the Navy Cross (Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard) and the Air Force Cross (Air Force). The Distinguished Service Cross was first awarded during World War I. In addition, a number of awards were made for actions before World War I. In many cases, these were to soldiers who had received a Certificate of Merit for gallantry which, at the time, was the only other honor besides the *Medal of Honor* the Army could award. Others were belated recognition of actions in the Philippines, on the Mexican Border and during the Boxer Rebellion.

The Distinguished Service Cross is awarded to a person who, while serving in any capacity with the Army, distinguishes himself or herself by extraordinary heroism not justifying the award of a *Medal of Honor*; while engaged in an action against an enemy of the



*United States; while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing Armed Force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.*

*Awarded for extraordinary heroism not justifying the award of a Medal of Honor; The act or acts of heroism must have been so notable and have involved risk of life so extraordinary as to set the individual apart from his or her comrades.*

#### Navy Cross

The Navy Cross is the highest medal that can be awarded by the United States Department of the Navy and the second highest award given for valor. It is normally only awarded to members of the United States Navy, United States Marine Corps and United States Coast Guard, but could be awarded to all branches of United States military as well as members of foreign militaries. It was established by Act of Congress (Pub.L. 65-253) and approved on February 4, 1919. The *Navy Cross* is equivalent to the *Distinguished Service Cross* (Army) and the *Air Force Cross*.

Awarded for extreme gallantry and risk of life in actual combat with an armed enemy force and going beyond the call of duty. The *Navy Cross* was instituted in part due to the entrance of the United States into World War I.



Many European nations had the custom of decorating heroes from other nations, but the *Medal of Honor* was the sole American award for valor at the time. The Army instituted the *Distinguished Service Cross* and *Distinguished Service Medal* in 1918, while the Navy followed suit in 1919, retroactive to 6 April 1917. Originally, the *Navy Cross* was lower in precedence than the *Navy Distinguished Service Medal*, because it was awarded for both combat heroism and for "other distinguished service." Congress revised this on 7 August 1942, making the *Navy Cross* a combat-only award and second only to the *Medal of Honor*. Since its creation, it has been awarded more than 6,300 times.

#### Air Force Cross:



The *Air Force Cross* is the second highest military decoration that can be awarded to a member of the United States Air Force. The *Air Force Cross* is the Air Force decoration equivalent to the *Distinguished Service Cross* (Army) and the *Navy Cross* (Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard).

The *Air Force Cross* is awarded for extraordinary heroism not justifying the award of the *Medal of Honor*. It may be awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity with the U.S Air Force, distinguishes him or herself by extraordinary heroism in combat.

Awarded for Extraordinary heroism not justifying the award of a *Medal of Honor* while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States; while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.



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#### Presidential Unit Citation:



The *Presidential Unit Citation (PUC)*, originally called the *Distinguished Unit Citation*, is awarded to units of the Armed Forces of the United States and allies for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy on or after 7 December 1941 (the date of the Attack on Pearl Harbor and the start of American involvement in World War II). The unit must display such gallantry, determination, and esprit de corps in accomplishing its mission under extremely difficult and hazardous conditions so as to set it apart from and above other units participating in the same campaign.

Since its inception by Executive Order on 26 February 1942, retroactive to 7 December 1941, to 2008, the *Presidential Unit Citation* has been awarded in such conflicts as World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Iraq War, Afghanistan War and the Cold War.

The degree of heroism required is the same as that which would warrant award of the *Distinguished Service Cross*, *Air Force Cross* or *Navy Cross* to an individual. In some cases, one or more individuals within the unit may have also been awarded personal recognitions for their contribution to the actions for which their entire unit was awarded a *Presidential Unit Citation*.

#### Army and Air Force

The Army citation was established as the *Distinguished Unit Citation* by Executive Order No. 9075 on 26 February 1942, and received its present name on 3 November 1966. As with other Army unit citations, the *PUC* is in a larger frame that is worn above the right pocket. All members of the unit may wear the decoration, whether or not they personally participated in the acts for which the unit was cited. Only those assigned to the unit at the time of the action cited may wear the decoration as a permanent award. For the Army and Air Force, the emblem itself is a solid blue ribbon enclosed in a gold frame. The Air Force *PUC* was adopted from the Army *Distinguished Unit Citation*, after they were made into a separate military branch in 1947. They also renamed the unit citation

to its present name on 3 November 1966. The Air Force wears its unit citation on the left pocket below all personal awards, unlike the Army not every unit award is enclosed in a gold frame. The Citation is carried on the unit's regimental colors in the form of a blue streamer, 4 ft (1.2 m) long and 2.75 in (7.0 cm) wide. For the Army, only on rare occasions will a unit larger than battalion qualify for award of this decoration.

## Navy and Marine Corps

The Navy citation is the unit equivalent of a *Navy Cross* and was established by Executive Order No. 9050 on 6 February 1942. The Navy version has blue, yellow, and red horizontal stripes. To distinguish between the two versions of the *Presidential Unit Citation*, the Navy version is typically referred to as the *Navy and Marine Corps Presidential Unit Citation* while the Army and Air Force refer to the decoration simply as the *Presidential Unit Citation*. These are only worn by persons who meet the criteria at the time it is awarded to the unit. Unlike the Army, in the Navy and Marine Corps, those who later join the unit do not wear it on a temporary basis.

## Distinguished Service Medal



The *Distinguished Service Medal (DSM)* is a military award of the United States Army that is presented to any person who, while serving in any capacity with the United States military, has distinguished himself or herself by exceptionally meritorious service to the Government in a duty of great responsibility. The performance must be such as to merit recognition for service that is clearly exceptional. Exceptional performance of normal duty will not alone justify an award of this decoration.

Separate *Distinguished Service Medals* exist for the different branches of the military as well as a fifth version of the medal which is a senior award of the United States Department of Defense. The Army version of the *Distinguished Service Medal* is typically referred to simply as the "*Distinguished Service Medal*" while the other branches of service use the service name as a prefix.

For service not related to actual war, the term "duty of a great responsibility" applies to a narrower range of positions than in time of war, and requires evidence of conspicuously significant achievement. However, justification of the award may accrue by virtue of exceptionally meritorious service in a succession of high positions of great importance.

Awards may be made to persons other than members of the Armed Forces of the United States for wartime services only, and then only under exceptional circumstances, with the express approval of the President in each case. Awards may be made to persons other than members of the Armed Forces of the United States for wartime services only, and then only under exceptional circumstances, with the express approval of the President in each case. It is awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity with the United States Army, has distinguished himself or herself by exceptionally meritorious service to the Government in a duty of great responsibility. The performance must be such as to merit recognition for service which is clearly exceptional. Exceptional performance of normal duty will not alone justify an award of this decoration.

For service not related to actual war, the term "duty of a great responsibility" applies to a narrower range of positions, than in time of war, and requires evidence of conspicuously significant achievement. However, justification of the award may accrue by virtue of exceptionally meritorious service in a succession of high positions of great importance.

Awards may be made to other than members of the Armed Forces of the United States for wartime services only, and then only under exceptional circumstances, with the express approval of the President in each case.



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## Silver Star

The *Silver Star* is the third-highest military decoration that can be awarded to a member of any branch of the United States armed forces for valor in the face of the enemy.



The *Silver Star* is awarded for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States not justifying one of the two higher awards - the service crosses (*Distinguished Service Cross*, the *Navy Cross*, or the *Air Force Cross*), the second-highest military decoration, or the *Medal of Honor*, the highest decoration. The *Silver Star* may be awarded to any person who, while serving in any capacity with the armed forces, distinguishes himself or herself by extraordinary heroism involving one of the following actions:

*In action against an enemy of the United States*

*While engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force*

*While serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party*

The *Silver Star* differs from the service crosses in that it requires a lesser degree of gallantry and need not be earned while in a position of great responsibility.

Air Force pilots are often considered eligible to receive a *Silver Star* upon becoming an ace (having five or more confirmed kills), which entails the pilot intentionally and successfully risking his life multiple times under combat conditions and emerging victorious.

**Soldiers who received a *Citation Star* for gallantry in action during World War I were eligible to apply to have the citation converted to the *Silver Star*. The *Valorous Unit Award* is considered the unit level equivalent of a *Silver Star*.**

### Distinguished Flying Cross



The *Distinguished Flying Cross* (DFC) is given for single acts of heroism or extraordinary achievement during aerial flight in combat.

The *Air Medal* is given to persons performing exceptionally while in aerial flight, which does not measure up to the level of the *Distinguished Flying Cross*, or is not during combat. For example, the *Air Medal* may be given for "sustained distinction in the performance of duties involving regular and frequent participation in aerial flight for a period of at least 6 months."

The *Distinguished Flying Cross* is a medal awarded to any officer or enlisted member of the United States armed forces who distinguishes himself or herself in support of operations by "heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial flight, subsequent to November 11, 1918." The decoration may also be given for an act performed prior to that date when the individual has been recommended for, but has not received the *Medal of Honor*, *Distinguished Service Cross*, *Navy Cross*, *Air Force Cross* or *Distinguished Service Medal*.

The *Distinguished Flying Cross* was authorized by Section 12 of the Air Corps Act enacted by the United States Congress on July 2, 1926, as amended by Executive Order 7786 on January 8, 1938.

The first award of the *Distinguished Flying Cross* was made by President Calvin Coolidge on May 2, 1927, to ten aviators of the Air Corps who had participated in the Pan American Good Will Flight, which took place from December 21, 1926 to May 2, 1927. Two of the airmen died in a mid-air collision trying to land at Buenos Aires in March 1927, and received their awards posthumously. Since the award had only been authorized by Congress the previous year, no medals had yet been struck, and the Pan American airmen initially received only certificates. Among the ten airmen were Major Herbert A. Dargue, Captains Ira C. Eaker and Muir S. Fairchild, and 1st Lt. Ennis C. Whitehead.

Charles Lindbergh received the first presentation of the medal little more than a month later, from Coolidge during the Washington, DC homecoming reception on June 11, 1927, from his trans-Atlantic flight. The medal had hurriedly been struck and readied just for that occasion. Interestingly, the 1927 War Department General Order (G.O. 8), authorizing Lindbergh's *DFC* states that it was awarded by the President, while the General Order (G.O. 6) for the Pan American Flyers' *DFC* citation notes that the War Department awarded it "by direction of the President." The first *Distinguished Flying Cross* to be awarded to a Naval Aviator was received by then-Commander Richard E. Byrd, for his flight on May 9, 1926, to and from the North Pole. Both Lindbergh and Byrd also received the *Medal of Honor* for their feats.

Numerous military recipients of the medal would later earn greater fame in other occupations—several astronauts, actors and politicians (including former President George H. W. Bush) are *Distinguished Flying Cross* holders. *DFC* awards could be retroactive to cover notable achievements back until the beginning of World War I. On February 23, 1929, Congress passed special legislation to allow the award of the *DFC* to the Wright brothers for their December 17, 1903 flight.

Other civilians who have received the award include Wiley Post, Jacqueline Cochran, Roscoe Turner, Amelia Earhart, and Eugene Ely. Eventually, it was limited to military personnel by an Executive Order issued by President Coolidge. During World War II the medal's award criteria varied widely depending on the theater of operations, aerial combat, and the missions accomplished. In Europe some bomber crewmembers received it for completing a tour of duty of twenty-five sortees; elsewhere much higher criteria were used. During wartime, members of the Armed Forces of friendly foreign nations serving with the United States are eligible for the *Distinguished Flying Cross*. It is also given to those who display heroism while working as instructors or students at flying schools.

### Bronze Star



The *Bronze Star Medal* (or *BSM*) is a United States Armed Forces individual military decoration that may be awarded for bravery, acts of merit, or meritorious service. When awarded for bravery, it is the fourth-highest combat award of the U.S. Armed Forces and the ninth highest military award (including both combat and non-combat awards) in the order of precedence of U.S. military decorations. Officers from the other federal uniformed services are also eligible to receive the award if they are militarized or detailed to serve with a service branch of the armed forces.

The *Bronze Star Medal* was established by Executive Order 9419, 4 February 1944 (superseded by Executive Order 11046, 24 August 1962, as amended by Executive Order 13286, 28 February 2003).

The *Bronze Star Medal* may be awarded by the Secretary of a military department or the Secretary of Homeland Security with regard to the Coast Guard when not operating as a service in the Navy, or by such military commanders, or other appropriate officers as the Secretary concerned may designate, to any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Coast Guard of the United States, after December 6, 1941, distinguishes, or has distinguished, himself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight:

*While engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States;*

*While engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or*

*While serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.*

The acts of heroism are of a lesser degree than required for the award of the *Silver Star*. The acts of merit or acts of valor must be less than that required for the *Legion of Merit* but must nevertheless have been meritorious and accomplished with distinction. The *Bronze Star Medal* is awarded only to service members in combat who are receiving imminent danger pay.

The award may be made to each member of the Armed Forces of the United States who, after 6 December 1941, was cited in orders or awarded a certificate for exemplary conduct in ground combat against an armed enemy after 7 December 1941. For this purpose, an award of the *Combat Infantryman Badge* or *Combat Medical Badge* is considered as a citation in orders. Documents executed since 4 August 1944 in connection with recommendations for the award of decorations of higher degree than the *Bronze Star Medal* cannot be used as the basis for an award under this paragraph.

The award that eventually became the *Bronze Star Medal* was conceived by Colonel Russell P. "Red" Reeder in 1943, who believed it would aid morale if there was a medal which could be awarded by captains of companies or batteries to deserving people serving under them. Reeder felt the medal should be a ground equivalent of the *Air Medal*, and proposed that the new award be called the "Ground Medal."

The idea eventually rose through the military bureaucracy and gained supporters. General George C. Marshall, in a memorandum to President Franklin D. Roosevelt dated 3 February 1944, wrote:

*"The fact that the ground troops, Infantry in particular, lead miserable lives of extreme discomfort and are the ones who must close in personal combat with the enemy, makes the maintenance of their morale of great importance. The award of the Air Medal has had an adverse reaction on the ground troops, particularly the Infantry Riflemen who are now suffering the heaviest losses, air or ground, in the Army, and enduring the greatest hardships."*

The *Air Medal* had been adopted two years earlier to raise airmen's morale. President Roosevelt authorized the *Bronze Star Medal* by Executive Order 9419 dated 4 February 1944, retroactive to 7 December 1941. This authorization was announced in War Department Bulletin No. 3, dated 10 February 1944.

The Executive Order was amended by President John F. Kennedy, per Executive Order 11046 dated 24 August 1962, to expand the authorization to include those serving with friendly forces. This allowed for awards where U.S. service members might be involved in an armed conflict where the United States was not a belligerent. At the time of the Executive Order, for example, the U.S. was not a belligerent in Vietnam, so U.S. advisers serving with the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces would not have been eligible for the award.

Since the award criteria state that the *Bronze Star Medal* may be awarded to "any person...while serving in any capacity in or with" the U.S. Armed Forces, awards to members of foreign armed services serving with the United States are permitted. Thus, a number of Allied soldiers received the *Bronze Star Medal* in World War II, as well as U.N. soldiers in the Korean War, Vietnamese and allied forces in the Vietnam War, and coalition forces in recent military operations such as the Gulf War, Operation Enduring Freedom and the Iraq War.

A number of *Bronze Stars with Valor Device* were awarded to veterans of the Battle of Mogadishu.



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## Purple Heart



The *Purple Heart* is a United States military decoration awarded in the name of the President to those who have been wounded or killed while serving on or after April 5, 1917 with the U.S. military. The *National Purple Heart Hall of Honor* is located in New Windsor, New York. With its forerunner, the *Badge of Military Merit*, which took the form of a heart made of purple cloth, the *Purple Heart* is the oldest award that is still given to members of the U.S. military, the only earlier award being the obsolete *Fidelity Medallion*.

The original *Purple Heart*, designated as the *Badge of Military Merit*, was established by George Washington, then the commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, by order from his Newburgh, New York headquarters on August 7, 1782. The actual order includes the phrase, "Let it be known that he who wears the *Military Order of the Purple Heart* has given of his blood in the defense of his homeland and shall forever be revered by his fellow countrymen." The *Badge of Military Merit* was only awarded to three Revolutionary War soldiers and from then on as its legend grew, so did its appearance. Although never abolished, the award of the badge was not proposed again officially until after World War I.

On October 10, 1927, Army Chief of Staff General Charles Pelot Summerall directed that a draft bill be sent to Congress "to revive the *Badge of Military Merit*". The bill was withdrawn and action on the case ceased on January 3, 1928, but the office of the Adjutant General was instructed to file all materials collected for possible future use. A number of private interests sought to have the medal reinstated in the Army. One of these was the board of directors of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum in Ticonderoga, New York.

On January 7, 1931, Summerall's successor, General Douglas MacArthur, confidentially reopened work on a new design, involving the Washington Commission of Fine Arts. This new design was issued on the bicentennial of George Washington's birth. Elizabeth Will, an Army heraldic specialist in the Office of the Quartermaster General, was named to redesign the newly revived medal, which became known as the *Purple Heart*. Using general specifications provided to her, Will created the design sketch for the present medal of the *Purple Heart*. Her obituary, in the February 8, 1975 edition of the

### **Washington Post newspaper, reflects her many contributions to military heraldry.**

The Commission of Fine Arts solicited plaster models from three leading sculptors for the medal, selecting that of John R. Sinnock of the Philadelphia Mint in May 1931. By Executive Order of the President of the United States, the *Purple Heart* was revived on the 200th Anniversary of George Washington's birth, out of respect to his memory and military achievements, by War Department General Orders No. 3, dated February 22, 1932. The *Purple Heart* award is a heart-shaped medal within a gold border, 1  $\frac{1}{8}$  inches (35 mm) wide, containing a profile of General George Washington. Above the heart appears a shield of the coat of arms of George Washington (a white shield with two red bars and three red stars in chief) between sprays of green leaves. The reverse consists of a raised bronze heart with the words FOR MILITARY MERIT below the coat of arms and leaves. The ribbon is 1 and  $\frac{1}{8}$  inches (35 mm) wide and consists of the following stripes:  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch (3 mm) white 67101; 1  $\frac{1}{8}$  inches (29 mm) purple 67115; and  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch (3 mm) white 67101. As with other combat medals, multiple awards are denoted by Award Stars for the Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard, or Oak Leaf Clusters for the Army and Air Force.

The criteria were announced in a War Department circular dated February 22, 1932 and authorized award to soldiers, upon their request, who had been awarded the *Meritorious Service Citation Certificate*, *Army Wound Ribbon*, or were authorized to wear *Wound Chevrons* subsequent to April 5, 1917, the day before the United States entered World War I. The first *Purple Heart* was awarded to MacArthur. During the early period of American involvement in World War II (December 7, 1941 – September 22, 1943), the *Purple Heart* was awarded both for wounds received in action against the enemy and for meritorious performance of duty. With the establishment of the *Legion of Merit*, by an Act of Congress, the practice of awarding the *Purple Heart* for meritorious service was discontinued. By Executive Order 9277, dated December 3, 1942, the decoration was extended to be applicable to all services and the order required that regulations of the Services be uniform in application as far as practicable. This executive order also authorized the award only for wounds received. AR 600-45, dated September 22, 1943, and May 3, 1944 identify circumstances required to meet in order to be eligible for the *Purple Heart* for military and civilian personnel during World War II era.

Executive Order 10409, dated February 12, 1952, revised authorizations to include the Service Secretaries subject to approval of the Secretary of Defense. Executive Order 11016, dated April 25, 1962, included provisions for posthumous award of the *Purple Heart*. Executive Order 12464, dated February 23, 1984, authorized award of the *Purple Heart* as a result of terrorist attacks or while serving as part of a peacekeeping force subsequent to March 28, 1973.

The Senate approved an amendment to the 1985 Defense Authorization Bill on June 13, 1985 which changed the precedence from immediately above the *Good Conduct Medal* to immediately above the *Meritorious Service Medals*. Public Law 99-145 authorized the award for wounds received as a result of friendly fire. Public Law 104-106 expanded the eligibility date, authorizing award of the *Purple Heart* to a former prisoner of war who was wounded before April 25, 1962. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998 (Public Law 105-85) changed the criteria to delete authorization for award of the *Purple Heart Medal* to any civilian national of the United States while serving under competent authority in any capacity with the Armed Forces. This change was effective May 18, 1998.

During World War II, nearly 500,000 *Purple Heart Medals* were manufactured in anticipation of the estimated casualties resulting from the planned Allied invasion of Japan. To the present date, total combined American military casualties of the sixty-five years following the end of World War II, including the Korean and Vietnam Wars, have not exceeded that number. In 2003, there were still 120,000 of these *Purple Heart Medals* in stock. There are so many in surplus that combat units in Iraq and Afghanistan are able to keep *Purple Heart Medals* on-hand for immediate award to wounded soldiers in the field.

The "History" section of the November 2009 edition of *National Geographic* estimated the number of *Purple Heart Medals* given as below. Above the estimates, the text reads, "Any tally of *Purple Heart Medals* is an estimate. Awards are often given during conflict; records aren't always exact."

World War I: 320,518  
 World War II: 1,076,245  
 Korean War: 118,650  
 Vietnam War: 351,794  
 Persian Gulf War: 607  
 Afghanistan War: 7,027 (as of 5 June 2010)  
 Iraq War: 35,321 (as of 5 June 2010)

Enemy-related injuries which justify the award of the *Purple Heart* include injury caused by enemy bullet, shrapnel, or other projectile created by enemy action; injury caused by enemy placed land mine, naval mine, or trap; injury caused by enemy released chemical, biological, or nuclear agent; injury caused by vehicle or aircraft accident resulting from enemy fire; concussion injuries caused as a result of enemy generated explosions.

Injuries or wounds which do not qualify for award of the *Purple Heart* include frostbite or trench foot injuries; heat stroke; food poisoning not caused by enemy agents; chemical, biological, or nuclear agents not released by the enemy; battle fatigue; disease not directly caused by enemy agents; accidents, to include explosive, aircraft, vehicular, and other accidental wounding not related to or caused by enemy action; self-inflicted wounds (e.g., a soldier accidentally fires their own gun and the bullet strikes their leg), except when in the heat of battle, and not involving gross negligence; post-traumatic stress disorders; and jump injuries not caused by enemy action.

It is not intended that such a strict interpretation of the requirement for the wound or injury to be caused by direct result of hostile action be taken that it would preclude the award being made to deserving personnel. Commanders must also take into consideration the circumstances surrounding an injury, even if it appears to meet the criteria. In the case of an individual injured while making a parachute landing from an aircraft that had been brought down by enemy fire; or, an individual injured as a result of a vehicle accident caused by enemy fire, the decision will be made in favor of the individual and the award will be made. As well, individuals wounded or killed as a result of "friendly fire" in the "heat of battle" will be awarded the *Purple Heart* as long as the "friendly" projectile or agent was released with the full intent of inflicting damage or destroying enemy troops or equipment. Individuals injured as a result of their own negligence, such as by driving or walking through an unauthorized area known to have been mined or placed off limits or searching for or picking up unexploded munitions as war souvenirs, will not be awarded the *Purple Heart* as they clearly were not injured as a result of

enemy action, but rather by their own negligence.

From 1942 to 1997, civilians serving or closely affiliated with the armed forces, as government employees, Red Cross workers, war correspondents and the like, were eligible to receive the *Purple Heart*. About 100 men and women received the award, the most famous being newspaperman Ernie Pyle, who was awarded a posthumous *Army Purple Heart* after being killed by Japanese machine gun fire in 1945.

The most recent *Purple Heart Medals* presented to civilians occurred after the terrorist attacks at Khobar Towers, Saudi Arabia, in 1996, about 40 U.S. civil service employees received the award for their injuries.

In 1997, however, at the urging of the *Military Order of the Purple Heart*, Congress passed legislation prohibiting future awards of the *Purple Heart* to civilians. Today, the *Purple Heart* is only for those men and women in uniform. Civilians who are killed or wounded as a result of hostile action now receive the new *Defense of Freedom Medal*, created shortly after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

*The Defense Superior Service Medal* and *The Legion of Merit* are typically awarded to Senior Military Officers. *The Legion of Merit* is also awarded to Military and Political figures of Foreign Governments.



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