

MILITARY DECORATIONS



Army Medal of Honor

Navy Medal of Honor

Air Force Medal of Honor

The United States has a history of honoring military duty with decorations dating back to the Fidelity Medallion in 1790. During the Civil War, Congress established the Medal of Honor for the United States Navy and Army. The Air Force's Medal of Honor was established in 1965. The Medal of Honor is only conferred to members of the United States Armed Forces for actions of conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty. There have been over 3500 recipients of the Medal of Honor, with several awarded in 2018. Donald E. Ballard is our state's only living Medal of Honor awardee, so honored for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life and beyond the call of duty in the Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam, 16 May 1968

Each branch of the Armed Forces awards a Service Cross for extreme gallantry and risk of life in actual combat with an armed enemy force not justifying the award of a Medal of Honor. The United States' Army Distinguished Service Cross has been awarded over 13,600 times. The Navy Cross has been awarded more than 6300 times. The Air Force Cross has been awarded over 200 times.

The Coast Guard Cross was established in 2010 to honor service members' extraordinary heroism in action, while not operating under the Department of the Navy. It has yet to be awarded.

The Silver Star is the third highest military combat decoration that can be awarded to a member of the United States Armed Forces. It is awarded for gallantry in action of such a high degree that they are above those required for all other U.S. combat decorations but do not merit award of the Medal of Honor or a Service Cross.

There are many other types of decorations, such as Superior Service Medals, Meritorious Service Medals or medals for non-combat heroism. The Purple Heart is one of the most well-known medals and is awarded for being wounded or killed as a result of enemy action. More than 1.8 million Purple Heart medals have been presented to service members since the award was created in 1782.

Take time to remember the men and women of our Armed Forces, not only during November but every day.