

President Trump Restores a Day Meant to Honor Our Nation's Greatest Heroes

Friday, President Donald Trump commemorated a little-known day meant to honor our nation's greatest heroes—a day that has had little fanfare itself since it was established by Congress in 1990.

With 25 recipients of the Medal of Honor at his side, the president expressed his gratitude for their service. He stated:

Thank you very much. This is a great honor for me. These are very, very brave people standing behind me. And we're here today to mark Medal of Honor Day, and it is my great privilege and high honor to welcome 25 Medal of Honor recipients to our White House. Very special honor, thank you all very much ...

One-third of the nation's 75 living Medal of Honor recipients are with us. So it's really – that's a great tribute to all of us, a great tribute to our nation.

Each of you has risen above and beyond the call of duty in defense of our country, our people, and our flag. You have poured out your hearts, your sweat, and your tears like few others, and your blood – most importantly your blood for the United States of America. We thank you, very much thank you.

You are the soul of our nation, and a grateful republic salutes you. Constantly we're saluting you. We have great admiration and respect, believe me. I know what you've been through.

We write your names and deeds in our national memory, and we will forever remember – forever, forever and ever – those who did not come home, but who died for the cause of freedom.

I want to thank the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation for preserving the incredible stories of our Medal of Honor heroes for future generations. Done a great job.

In this room hangs the portrait of our 26th President, Theodore Roosevelt. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for his courage alongside his band of Rough Riders at the Battle of San Juan Hill. You know about the Rough Riders, right?

Right? Absolutely. His medal, which is also displayed here, is a reminder of how blessed we truly are to live in the land of heroes. And you are our greatest heroes.

To all of those gathered here today, and to all of those warriors who could not be with us, we thank you. Your acts of valor inspire us – and they show us that there is always someone on the night watch to ensure a bright sun rises on America each and every morning.

God bless you. God bless our military and God bless the United States of America.

I want to just thank you very much for being here. It's my great honor.

The Medal of Honor recipients also presented the president with a small gift: a copy of the book *Portraits of Valor* inscribed with the signatures of all the men who came to visit him that day, along with the signatures of 200 other Medal of Honor recipients.

Medal of Honor day was first commemorated in 1991, but was largely ignored over the next 26 years. The only other recognition the day has received was when President Barack Obama visited Arlington National Cemetery in 2009.