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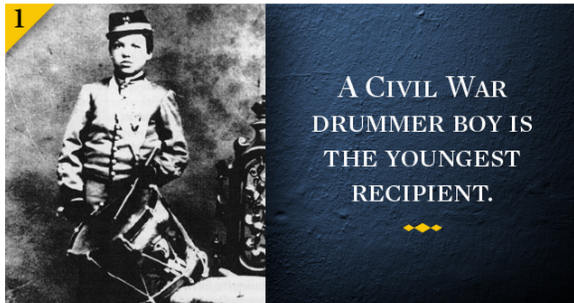
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Medal of Honor: 5 Surprising Facts About the Military's Highest Award

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Behind the United States' highest military award are people willing to give the ultimate sacrifice. We remember their bravery on March 25, National Medal of Honor Day.



A reproduction of this photo is at the Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium.

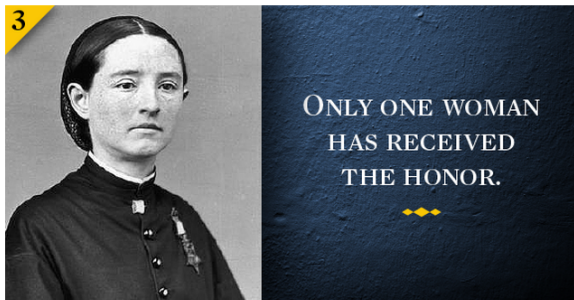
1. A Civil War drummer boy is the youngest recipient.

During the Civil War, 11-year-old William Johnston enlisted in the Union Army. In 1862 — the same year a bill established the Medal of Honor — Confederate forces overpowered Johnston's unit, forcing the men to retreat and discard their equipment. But Johnston refused to relinquish his drum. When President Abraham Lincoln heard, he wrote the secretary of war to nominate Johnston.



2. More than 20% of recipients are immigrants.

According to the CATO Institute, foreign-born U.S. soldiers have been honored for their bravery on the battlefield in every war since the medal's inception. The first Mexican to be recognized, Staff Sgt. Marcario Garcia single-handedly silenced two German machine gun emplacements — despite being wounded — allowing his company to advance.



3. Only one woman has received the honor.

A civilian contractor, Mary Edwards Walker was the first female surgeon employed by the Army. The only woman and one of just eight civilians to receive the medal, Walker earned the award for treating patients across enemy lines, which led to her capture by Confederate forces. In 1917, a military board rescinded the medals of nearly 1,000 recipients who had not engaged in "actual combat with the enemy." President Jimmy Carter restored her award in 1977.



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Briana Hartzell

Briana knows all about moving. This Navy wife has helped her husband relocate to four different naval air stations in the last three years. A former USAA employee, Briana is co-founder of The Triple Dish, a blog focused on food, fitness and military life.

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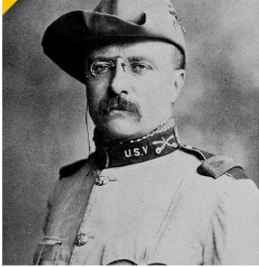
Wendy Poling

Wendy is a social media strategist and founder of MyMilitaryLife.com, featuring a popular military spouse blog and the hit podcast Navy Wife Radio and now Military Life Radio. She is the wife of a submariner who has also served in Afghanistan.

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Charles "Chazz" Pratt



THEODORE ROOSEVELT IS THE ONLY PRESIDENTIAL RECIPIENT.

4. Theodore Roosevelt is the only presidential recipient.

President Bill Clinton awarded the medal to the Rough Riders leader 82 years after his death. Roosevelt was previously overlooked because of a lack of evidence during the Spanish-American War.

Bonus: Buffalo Bill and Charles Lindbergh are two other famous recipients.



IT'S MORE THAN A MEDAL.

5. It's more than a medal.

Formal benefits include a monthly pension, increased retirement pay, free flights on military aircraft, invitations to presidential inaugurations and a gold-lettered headstone if buried at Arlington National Cemetery. USAA employee Grace Adams Fawcett, daughter of medal recipient Staff Sgt. Lucian Adams, remembers accompanying her dad to Richard Nixon's second presidential inauguration. Read more about their story [here](#).

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Chaz Pratt III is a former U.S. Army Captain who made the Military-to-Civilian career transition in 1994. In his book, *The Fort Living Room Transition Course*, he shares valuable tips & tricks to help you succeed. Since his transition from the military, he's worked for several Fortune 500 companies, including Pfizer, Genentech, and St. Jude Medical, among others.

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