



## PRESS RELEASE

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES

DUBLIN, IRELAND

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<http://dublin.usembassy.gov>

On August 24, 2010, in the elegant Rotunda of the U.S. Embassy, **Ambassador Daniel M. Rooney presented a Republic of Korea Medal for Korean War Service to 12 eligible American veterans currently living in Ireland.** Ranging in age from 79 to 87, the “vets” were applauded by more than 80 guests and relatives, who attended the ceremony, as well as the reception afterwards. **Ambassador to the Republic of Korea his Excellency, Mr. Chang-Yoeb Kim, also attended.**

### **BACKGROUND**

**The Korean War Service Medal** (or Republic of Korea War Service Medal (ROKWSM)) is a decoration of South Korea which was **first authorized by that country in December 1950.** Originally known as the “Incident Participation Medal,” it was later renamed the Korean War Service Medal.

While a number of countries accepted the award, **at the time of the Korean War Service Medal's presentation to U.N. troops, the United States of America declined to award the medal to U.S. soldiers.** This was based on regulations of the time which curtailed the acceptance and wear of foreign decorations on U.S. military uniforms.

**In 1999, the South Korean government proposed the decoration be reactivated** and retroactively awarded to all Korean and U.N. veterans who had served in the Korean War.

On August 20, 1999, Francis M. Rush Jr., Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army authorized the Korean War Service Medal for distribution and wear by service members of the United States military.



### Korean War Medal

Recently, the Defense Department has announced that Korean War veterans may accept and wear the **(Republic of Korea) War Service Medal**.

It was first awarded on Nov. 15, 1951, by the South Korean Minister of Defense to the **Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command**. The medal was intended for award to those who participated in the Korean War for at least 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days on or after June 25, 1950.



In his original offer, the Korean Minister of Defense stated that, "It is requested that you accept the Republic of Korea's recognition of the splendid service rendered by the **United Nations command** and delegate authority to commanders of forces of the nations fighting in Korea to award the Korean War Ribbon to members of their commands."

As noted, U.S. regulations were not in favor of the wear of foreign decorations on U.S military uniforms. Over the years many Korean War veterans had tried to get the Defense Department to accept the medal, but to no avail. In 1996 the Army noted that it could find no record that the Korean Government ever offered the medal to the Department of Defense, which was technically true: the **original offer** was made to the **United Nations Command**.

On August 20, 1998, Francis M. Rush Jr., Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army, approved the acceptance and wear of the Korean Service Medal by service members of the United States military. The task of issuing the medal was assigned to [Randolph Air Force Base](#) while the [National Personnel Records Center](#) was responsible for providing documentation to verify eligibility and updating military records to show receipt of the award. For the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Korean War, planned presentations of the decoration were scheduled for June 2000.

**To be eligible for this foreign award - personnel must have:**

- Served between the outbreak of hostilities, June 25, 1950, and the date the armistice was signed, July 27, 1953;
- Been on permanent assignment or on temporary duty for 30 consecutive days or 60 non-consecutive days; and
- Performed their duty within the territorial limits of, in the waters immediately adjacent to, or in aerial flight over, Korea while supporting or participating in combat.

A current copy of the medal is available but does not have the Taeguk (the traditional Korean Yin-Yang symbol) woven into the drape as the originals (shown above) do.

**Recipients of the Award:**

**Patrick CASSERLY                      Accepted by Celia Fleming (sister)**

**Charles DENNEHY**

**James DOLAN                              Accepted by Anne Dolan (spouse)**

**Thomas DUNLEAVY**

**Patrick FOX                                Accepted by Ed O'Shea (brother-in-law)**

**Michael JOY**

**John LEE                                    Accepted by Susan Lee (daughter)**

**Michael McCABE                        Accepted by Anne O'Dwyer (daughter)**

**Michael McCORMICK**

**Michael REYNOLDS**

**Sean TAHENY**

**Stanley THOMPSON                      Accepted by Frances Thompson (spouse)**

**Please see the link below for information on the Medal that is being presented.**

<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/library/factsheets/factsheet.asp?id=7846>

<http://www.history.navy.mil/medals/korea.htm>

<http://www.mymilitarymedals.com/blog/?p=305>

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