

State Funeral for War Veterans Awards Highest Honor, the General George Marshall Award to Senator Joni Ernst

Recognition for a Patriotic American who exemplifies the sacrifice, resilience, and service of the 16 million women and men who served during WWII -

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State Funeral for World War Veterans Names U.S. Senator Joni Ernst of Iowa Recipient of 2023 George Marshall Award.



Senator Joni Ernst with leaders of the National State Funeral for War Veterans Organization

- Recognition for a Patriotic American who exemplifies the sacrifice, resilience, and service of the 16 million women and men who served in our Armed Forces during World War II -

The State Funeral for War Veterans organization announced today that United States Senator from Iowa, the Honorable Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), will receive the 2023 national George Marshall Award. The honor recognizes a patriotic American who best celebrates the sacrifice, resilience, and service of the millions of women and men who served in our Armed Forces during World War II and the Korean War. Previous winners of the award include West Virginia Senator Joe Manchin in 2022, World War II Medal of Honor recipient Army Tech Sgt. Charles Coolidge in 2021, World War II Medal of Honor recipient USMC Hershel "Woody" Williams in 2020, and Congressman Steve Scalise (R-LA) in 2019.

Five Star U.S. Army General George Marshall led the American military during World War II. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill called him "the organizer of the Allied Victory in the Second World War." He was Army Chief of Staff from 1939 till 1945. Marshall later served as

Secretary of State under President Truman where he crafted the Marshall Plan for the economic recovery of Europe.

Presenting the award will be Will Swenson, the Vice President of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society and a recipient of the Medal of Honor from the War on Terror.

United State Senator Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) presented the 2021 award to Army Tech Sergeant Coolidge on Signal Mountain, Tennessee, on March 15, 2021. Congressman Scalise (R-LA) received his award at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans in 2019.



Logo, State Funeral for World War II Organization

Senator Ernst has been a champion of Veterans during her 10 years on Capitol Hill. After graduating from Iowa State University, she served in the Iowa Army National Guard, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel. Her Congressional assignments speak to her reverence for our military. She serves on the Armed Services Committee in the Senate and on the Subcommittee for Cybersecurity, Airland, and Emerging Threats and Capabilities where she is the ranking member.

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It is fitting that this national George Marshall award, that has been presented to two World War II Medal of Honor recipients, would honor a bi-partisan leader like Senator Joni Ernst today.”

Brent Casey, Grandson of the Last MOH holder from World War II

She worked hand in glove with our organization to assure the last Medal of Honor recipient from Korea, Army Col. Ralph Puckett, be allowed to lie in honor in the Rotunda of the Capitol in Washington, DC, just like the last MOH holder from World War II, USMC Hershel “Woody” Williams.

The State Funeral for World War II organization originated the idea for a National Funeral for the Last Medal of Honor recipient from Korean and World War II. The service for USMC Corporal Hershel “Woody” Williams took place in the Capitol on July 14, 2022. The service for Col Ralph Puckett will be this coming Monday, April 29, 2024 in the Rotunda of the Capitol. Speaker of the House of Representatives Mike Johnson and Senator Chuck Schumer will speak.

146 United States military personnel received the Medal of Honor for valor in combat during the Korean War. Col. Ralph Puckett, Jr. of Georgia was the last to be “reassigned to heaven.” Of the 5.7 million men and women who served in Korea, less than 500,000 are still alive.

“The approximately 500,000 remaining veterans of the Korean War, and their families will benefit from a National Funeral in Washington D.C. for the final Medal of Honor recipient Col Puckett,” said Bill McNutt, Co-Founder and National Chairman. “This will be a final salute to the great Korean War generation.”

“Without the efforts of Senator Ernst it would have been much more challenging to fulfill our mission of convincing Speaker Johnson to allow Col. Puckett to lie in Honor in the Capitol.” says National Board member Brett Reistad, a former National Commander of the American Legion.

This effort is the brainchild of McNutt’s 10-year-old daughter, Rabel, a public-school student, in honor of her godfather, United States Army Staff Sergeant Walter Ehlers, the oldest holder of the Congressional Medal of Honor when he died in 2014. He received the medal for his gallantry during The Battle for Normandy in France, June 1944.

Mr. Brent Casey, grandson of “Woody” Williams, and State Funeral for World War Veterans Chair in Kentucky, said “It is fitting that this national George Marshall award, that has been presented to two World War II Medal of Honor recipients in the past, would honor a great bi-partisan American leader like Senator Joni Ernst today.”

The presentation will be made at the Capitol in Washington, DC on Monday April 29, 2024 at approximately 1:45pm.

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State Funeral for War Veterans



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