

## 26 Marine heroes presented with medal of honor flags

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PRESS SERVICE

**MARINE BARRACKS WASHINGTON, D.C.** - Twenty-six Marine heroes were honored at a Medal of Honor flag presentation ceremony here yesterday.

A crowd of more than 1,000 friends, family members and patriotic spectators watched as Marine Commandant Gen. Michael W. Hagee and Sgt. Maj. John L. Estrada, sergeant major of the Marine Corps, presented flags to 16 Medal of Honor recipients and family members of 10 other Medal of Honor recipients.

"On behalf of all Marines, thank you for your service and example for the thousands of Marines that followed you," Hagee told the recipients. "Your legacy is these Marines."

Both houses of Congress approved the concept of the Medal of Honor flag and President George W. Bush signed it into law in October 2002.

The Medal of Honor flag commemorates the sacrifice and blood shed for freedom and emphasizes the Medal of

Honor's place as the highest award for valor that can be given to a U.S. military member. The flag's light blue color and white stars match the colors found on the Medal of Honor ribbon.

At the ceremony, each MOH recipient or family member accepted a flag from Hagee. As Vietnam War MOH recipient former Sgt. Maj. Allan J. Kellog Jr. was presented with his flag, the final presentation of the evening, the crowd gave the honorees a standing ovation.

Cpl. Amber T. Chavarria, a Marine Barracks Washington protocol non-commissioned officer who assisted in presenting the flags, said she felt proud just to be in the presence of such heroic individuals. "It's hard to describe how it feels being a part of this," Chavarria said. "These gentlemen did so far above and beyond what they were asked, and they did it in order for me to be able to do my job."

"Being in the presence of these Marines is a once-in-a-lifetime experience," Lance Cpl. Sean J. Sorbie, a training NCO, said. "I am proud just to have been a part of it."



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**Medal of Honor recipient, former Marine Pfc. Jacklyn H. Lucas, shakes Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Michael W. Hagee's hand while receiving his Medal of Honor flag during a parade ceremony at the Marine Barracks at 8th & I Streets, in Washington, D.C., Aug. 3.**

The parade ceremony concluded with the Marine Drum and Bugle Corps' playing of the "Marines Hymn" and a pass in review. The pass in review brought the crowd to their feet as nearly 200 Marines of the oldest post in the Corps saluted.

"Nobody does it up like the Marine Corps," said World

War II veteran Jack H. Lucas, who was awarded the Medal of Honor for actions against Japanese forces on Iwo Jima. "To have these young men here in our presence - it just rejuvenates this old heart of mine. I love the Corps even more knowing that my country is defended by such fine young people."