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Clockwise from top left, former Spc. 5 Dwight Birdwell, retired Maj. John Duffy, John Kaneshiro, son of the late Staff Sgt. Edward Kaneshiro, and former Spc. 5 Dennis Fujii receive the Medal of Honor from President Joe Biden. (WHITE HOUSE PHOTOS)

## **Belated Medals of Honor for 4 heroes**

our soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor on Tuesday, more than 50 years after their heroic actions in Vietnam.

Spc. 5 Dwight Birdwell, Spc. 5 Dennis Fujii and retired Maj. John Duffy received the nation's highest award for valor from President Joe Biden during a White House ceremony.

Staff Sgt. Edward Kaneshiro, who was killed in action in Vietnam, was honored posthumously. His son John accepted the award from the president.

"It's just astounding when you hear what each of them have done," Biden said.

All four men previously received awards for their actions in Vietnam. Kaneshiro, Fujii and Duffy received the Distinguished Service Cross. Birdwell was awarded the Silver Star. "Today, we are setting the record straight," Biden said. "We're upgrading the awards for four soldiers who performed acts of incredible heroism during the Vietnam conflict."

The upgrades are the result of extensive reviews, directed by Congress, of past valor awards to determine if a soldier's actions merit a higher award.

"It's been a long journey to this day for these heroes and their families," Biden said. "More than 50 years have passed since the jungles of Vietnam where, as young men, these soldiers first proved their mettle. Time has not diminished their astonishing bravery."

#### Staff Sgt. Edward Kaneshiro

On Dec. 1, 1966, Kaneshiro, a squad leader with the 1st Cavalry Division's 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, was on a search and destroy mission near Phu Huu 2 in Vietnam's Kim Son Valley.

Two squads of soldiers entered a village that they didn't know was heavily fortified by a much larger force of North Vietnamese troops, according to the award citation.

The enemy opened fire, killing the platoon leader and point man, wounding four others and pinning down the rest. Kaneshiro and his men moved to the gunfire.

Quickly assessing the situation, Kaneshiro crawled forward alone to attack a fully bunkered and concealed trench system the enemy was using.

Using grenades and his rifle, Kaneshiro silenced an enemy machine gunner and jumped into the trench to clear it.

See Medal of Honor, Page 6





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## Annual Meeting focuses on building the future force

ontinued transformation of the U.S. Army will be the focus of the 2022 Association of the U.S. Army Annual Meeting and Exposition.

Army leaders and AUSA have determined that "Building the Army of 2030" will be the theme of the meeting, which will take place Oct. 10–12 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C.

In the four years since Army Futures Command was established, the Army's top priority has been reshaping the force—including equipment, people and doctrine—to meet expected challenges.

The annual meeting will include keynote addresses from senior Army leaders, a wide range of forums, and Warriors Corner and Innovators Corner presentations.

Also scheduled are several award presentations, including the winners of the inaugural Best Squad Competition, NCO and Soldier of the Year and the Marshall Medal, AUSA's highest award for selfless service to the country.

The 2022 Marshall Medal recipient is Elizabeth Dole, former U.S. senator, two-time cabinet secretary, former American Red Cross leader and advocate for troops and their families.



Army Secretary Christine Wormuth, left, Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville, center, and Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston speak during the 2021 AUSA Annual Meeting and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

The meeting is free, but registration is required. Advanced registration is expected to open soon.

Some seated events require separate reservations and may have a fee.

The Army is about five years into a transformation launched to expand its capabilities and reorganize forces to defend the nation and meet future challenges.

It is making progress.

Army Secretary Christine Wormuth told Congress in May that she expects four long-range precision

fires systems to be fielded in fiscal year 2023. That includes a hypersonic weapon battery, the Precision Strike Missile, the Extended Range Cannon Artillery and a ship-sinking mid-range missile.

Transformation is more than just weapons. The Army creating a datacentric force that integrates technology with next-generation weapons. It is modernizing personnel policies, focusing on creating what Wormuth calls "positive command climate" as it builds more cohesive teams.

The Army is also boosting troop levels in Europe while also deploying forces and equipment to the Indo-Pacific in efforts to strengthen joint force integration, promote interoperability and demonstrate combat capabilities.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville, who was vice chief when the transformation effort began, has talked about finding the "sweet spot" of balancing the much-needed transformation of capabilities with continuing incremental improvements in current capabilities so the Army remains ready to fight.

For more information on the annual meeting, click here.



Soldiers, AUSA members, defense industry representatives and more gather on the exhibit floor of the 2021 AUSA Annual Meeting. (AUSA PHOTO)

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## 'Tribute to the Heroes' project to recreate D-Day announced in France



A bird's-eye view of landing craft, barrage balloons and Allied troops landing in Normandy, France, on D-Day, June 6, 1944. (U.S. MARITIME COMMISSION PHOTO)

n ambitious D-Day project has been announced in France to create what is being called a "living tableaux" to retell the history of the Allied landings of World War II and the Battle of Normandy.

Called Tribute to the Heroes, the plan is to create a 1,000-seat moving theater in the French town of Carentan-les-Marais in Normandy that would be a stage for a historically accurate retelling of the battle featuring video screens, immersive sound and live performers.

The intention is to have a program that is "more real than life," presenting scenes of American soldiers embarking, training in England and the ultimate landing on the beaches of Normandy.

It will be designed to tell the D-Day story with "sincerity and respect for the heroism of men and women who organized themselves, resisted, committed themselves and sacrificed themselves for the ultimate battle," organizers said. It speaks to American, British and French audiences with about 30 presentations as the theater moves up and down a track.

The program is expected to be

about one hour. The project is being done by Normandy Memory, a private company that will lease land from the local government.

Announced in France on June 30, Tribute to the Heroes is planned to open to the public in about two years, marking the 80th anniversary of Allied forces storming Normandy's beaches into Nazi-occupied France.

The unique exhibition is being designed to accommodate up to 600,000 visitors a year, at a cost of about \$32 each at current exchange rates.

More than 160,000 Allied troops landed on a 50-mile stretch of the Normandy coast on June 6, 1944.

The U.S., British and Canadian forces gained a foothold in France, surprising Nazi forces in a turning point in the war.

Carentan-les-Marais already has many D-Day oriented museums and tours. Market surveys show high interest in the U.S. and Europe among all ages and income categories regarding D-Day, according to the officials behind the creation of the new moving exhibition.

For more information and a first look at the project, click here.

## **AUSA**Extra

#### Voice for the Army – Support For the Soldier

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#### **AUSA Board of Directors nominates two new candidates**

he Association of the U.S. Army's Board of Directors has nominated two new candidates to serve as directors on the association's board.

The actions were taken when the board, AUSA's governing body, met June 28.

Nominated to serve as directors are Chris Kubasik, vice chair and CEO of L3Harris Technologies, and Ted Colbert, president and CEO of Boeing Defense, Space and Security.

Kubasik was nominated to succeed William Brown, who recently retired from L3Harris, and Colbert would fill the term of Leanne Caret, who recently retired from Boeing.

Additionally, during a virtual meeting in April, the board elected three new directors and reelected four current members to serve on the board.

Elected to serve as directors are



In addition to nominating new candidates, AUSA's Board of Directors has elected three new directors and reelected four current members. (AUSA PHOTO)

Jim Cannon, president and CEO of AM General; retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston; and Bob Tyrer, co-president of the Cohen Group.

Preston will replace retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack Tilley, and Tyrer will replace Rudy de Leon, a former deputy secretary of defense.

Elected for additional three-year

terms are Phebe Novakovic, chairman and CEO of General Dynamics; Mark Roualet, executive vice president for combat systems at General Dynamics; Mitch Snyder, president and CEO of Bell; and Andy Hove, managing director for the Horisonter Group.

Their three-year terms were effective July 1.



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#### **Medal of Honor**

From Page 1

"Over the distance of about 35 meters, he worked the ditch alone, destroying one enemy group with M-16 fire and two others with grenade fires," the citation says.

His assault enabled his soldiers to fall back, move the dead and wounded and reorganize, the citation says.

He died March 6, 1967, from a hostile gunshot wound in Vietnam.

#### Spc. 5 Dwight Birdwell

A citizen of the Cherokee Nation, Birdwell was serving with the 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 25th Infantry Division, on Jan. 31, 1968, when a large enemy force attacked the Tan Son Nhut Airbase near Saigon, Vietnam, according to the White House.

Enemy fighters disabled or destroyed many of the unit's vehicles and incapacitated Birdwell's tank commander. Under heavy enemy fire, Birdwell moved the tank commander to safety and fired the tank's weapons at the enemy, Biden said.

When he ran out of ammunition, he jumped out of the tank, grabbed an M60 machine gun and continued fighting.

"Even when the M60 was hit by enemy fire, causing it to explode and send shrapnel to Birdwell's face, chest, arms and hands, he remained on the battlefield," Biden said.

Ordered to get on a medical evacuation helicopter, Birdwell complied—only to crawl out the other side so he could keep fighting, Biden said.

Birdwell led a small group of defenders to disrupt the enemy assault until reinforcements arrived. He then helped evacuate the wounded until he was ordered to seek medical attention for his own wounds.

Honorably discharged on Dec. 29, 1968, today he practices law in Oklahoma City.

#### Spc. 5 Dennis Fujii

In 1971, Fujii was in Vietnam for his second combat tour, serving as a crew chief aboard a helicopter ambu-



Staff Sgt. Edward Kaneshiro poses for a photo in Japan in 1959. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

lance with the 67th Medical Group.

On Feb. 18, Fujii and his team were tasked with evacuating wounded Vietnamese soldiers from a "raging battlefield" in Laos, according to his award citation.

As the helicopter approached, it came under heavy enemy fire and crashed. A second helicopter landed and extracted all the downed crewmen except for a wounded Fujii, who was unable to board because of intense enemy fire, the citation says.

He waved off the helicopter and remained behind as the only American on the battlefield, Biden said.

During the night and throughout the next day, Fujii disregarded his own wounds and tended to the allied casualties. The next night, Fujii got a radio transmitter and called in American gunships to help repel another fierce attack.

For more than 17 hours, he repeatedly exposed himself to hostile fire to better observe enemy troop positions and to direct air strikes against them, Biden said.

When he was finally rescued on Feb. 20, the helicopter he was in came under heavy enemy fire and was forced to crash land at another South Vietnamese Ranger base. Fujii stayed at the camp for two more days until another helicopter could fly him to safety.

When talking to the press shortly

after the battle, Fujii downplayed his actions, Biden said.

"I like my job. I like to help other people who need help," the soldier said, according to Biden.

#### Retired Maj. John Duffy

Duffy, who served several assignments with the 5th Special Forces Group, was honored for his actions while serving as the senior adviser to the South Vietnamese army's 11th Airborne Battalion, 2nd Brigade, Airborne Division.

In April 1972, the commander of the 11th Airborne Battalion had been killed and the battalion command post destroyed. Duffy, the lone American on the base, was twice wounded, but he refused to be evacuated, Biden said.

On April 14, surrounded by a battalion-sized enemy force, Duffy directed the defense of Fire Support Base Charlie. After a failed effort to establish a landing zone for resupply aircraft, Duffy moved close to enemy anti-aircraft positions to call in airstrikes and was wounded again, but he still refused evacuation.

When the enemy launched a ground assault from all sides later that day, Duffy moved from position to position to adjust fire, spot targets for artillery and direct gunship fire, according to the White House.

"When the enemy finally gained control of a portion of the base and advanced to within ten meters of his position, Major Duffy had the supporting gunships make a run directly on him," according to his award citation.

Early on April 15, after another enemy ambush, Duffy led evacuees, many seriously wounded, to an evacuation area where he directed gunship fire on enemy positions and marked a landing zone for the helicopters.

In all, he served four tours in Vietnam. A resident of Santa Cruz, California, Duffy retired from the Army on May 31, 1977, and had a successful career as an author and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for poetry.

"He is the definition of a warriorpoet," Biden said.

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## Defense bills advance, but continuing resolution looms

he Senate and the House of Representatives return from their Fourth of July recess next week with numerous issues to address, including work on the fiscal 2023 National Defense Authorization Act and appropriations processes.

There was much activity on Capitol Hill in the weeks leading up to the holiday. In particular, the House

Government Affairs

Committee Appropriations advanced its version of the defense

funding bill and the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies funding bill, but the Senate has yet to hold votes on its versions of these bills.

The House and Senate Armed Services Committees have both advanced their versions of the NDAA and have held full committee markups. Both bills include pay raises for the troops and add additional money to the topline.

To view the respective committee summaries of the bills, click here and here.

We expect the full House of Representatives will take up its version of the NDAA in the coming weeks, but the timeline for the Senate bill remains unclear.



Both the House and Senate versions of the National Defense Authorization Act include pay raises for troops and add additional money to the topline. (ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL PHOTO)

We do not expect the appropriations bills or the NDAA to become law before the November elections.

As such, it is likely that a continuing resolution will be required to keep the government running at the Oct. 1 start of the new fiscal year.

The Association of the U.S. Army's No. 1 recommendation for Congress in all our meetings with staff is to pass these important bills in time for the new fiscal year to begin. Unfortunately, this year especially, electionyear politics are at play.

To help encourage lawmakers to make progress on these issues and others, we urge AUSA members to contact your elected officials and express your views in support of AU-SA's Focus Areas.

Here are links to reach your representatives and senators in Congress.

AUSA's Government Affairs team continues to meet with congressional staff to advocate for the Total Army in alignment with the association's legislative priorities. To date, we have met with over 70 offices, and more visits are planned.

Next week, Congress may vote again on the bipartisan Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics Act of 2022.

AUSA supports this legislation, which would deliver all generations of toxic-exposed veterans their earned health care and benefits under the Department of Veterans Affairs for the first time in the nation's history.

We will continue to monitor these

and other developments closely.



Josh Altman, center, the military legislative assistant for Sen. Jon Ossoff, D-Ga., speaks with soldiers from the 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, during a staff delegation visit to Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. SAVANNAH ROY)

Mark Haaland is AUSA's Government Affairs Director.

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## Discounts on travel, entertainment, electronics and more

summer is a time for fun, travel and transition, and your membership with the Association of the U.S. Army provides a variety of discounts for all occasions.

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**Susan Rubel** is AUSA's Association and Affinity Partnerships Director.

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### Leaders address space, network at chapter symposium

uring a symposium on Army space hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army's Greater Los Angeles chapter, senior leaders said that space technology is crucial to multidomain operations and network resiliency.

"The Army's unified network is the Army's contribution to [Joint All-Domain Command and Control], and

Greater Los Angeles at the core of the unified network is space," said Lt. Gen. John Morri-

son, the deputy Army chief of staff for command, control, communications, cyber operations and networks, or G-6, according to an Army press release.

"Our ability to extend an expeditionary Army and to fight multidomain operations in a congested and contested environment will always be reliant on space, so having multiple ways to communicate in space is crucial," Morrison said at the June symposium at the Westin Hotel in Long Beach, California.

Practical applications of the JADC2 network include linking sensors to shooters and data across all domains to all forces, according to the release.

The Army's Project Convergence 21 exercises made it clear that data fabric is very important to those capabilities, said Brig. Gen. Jeth Rey, director of Army Futures Command's Network Cross-Functional Team.

"Equally as important is thickening the network transport, and space plays a big role in that," Rey said. "We want systems that are transport-agnostic, multipath. We want a data-centric environment as we move away from a network-centric environment and leverage the cloud and other assets ... and we definitely want to ensure cyber security is baked in."

The Army continues to expand the capability and number of network gateways it can use to securely access the unified network, increasing



Soldiers with the 1st Armored Division learn how to set up and operate an inflatable satellite antenna at Camp Humphreys, South Korea. (U.S. ARMY/PVT. LEE HEE-WON)

network resiliency and flexibility "to obtain the strategic and operational effects needed in time and space to conduct multidomain operations," Morrison said, according to the release.

It is also important that systems have "seamless capability for soldiers that is plug-and-play," said Col. Shane Taylor of the Program Executive Office for Command, Control, Communications-Tactical.

"As we design the network architecture, we can bring the complexity



Soldiers with the 2nd Theater Signal Brigade conduct communications and data tests via a tactical terminal near Baumholder, Germany. (U.S. ARMY/IST LT. ADAM STANLEY)

out from the edge and up to division and our higher-level echelons, so that it doesn't have to be managed at the edge by soldiers on the ground," Taylor said.

Improving acquisition efforts is a key part of the process.

"In the past, it could take five to eight years for soldiers to get their hands on new equipment," Taylor said, according to the release. "But the Army pivoted to a two-year ... process that enables us to keep pace with technology and rapidly deliver communications equipment into the hands of soldiers much faster."

Regarding network security, the Army needs to work with industry on "guiding principles" that emphasize range of control, Morrison said.

"The adversary will be looking for any means at all to disrupt our operations, our ability to extend reach and our ability to command and control forces over significantly extended ranges," he said. "This marriage of commercial capability with military capability, and baking cyber security in from the very start, is how we guarantee this notion of a unified network that can support an Army that is conducting multidomain operations."

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