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University of Washington to dedicate Medal of Honor monument

They were eight ordinary men who did the extraordinary, who laid their lives on the line for those they loved both nearby and thousands of miles away; men who rescued their fellow soldiers at risk of their own lives, who took bullets so others didn't have to, who in one case defended the U.S. even though his relatives and friends were in internment camps.

The University of Washington will honor these eight Medal of Honor recipients who are also UW alumni with a new, prominent memorial to be dedicated this Veterans Day, Nov. 11.

University research indicates that the UW has more Medal of Honor recipients among its alumni than any other public university outside the service academies.

"The memorial will be a permanent, powerful reminder of the extraordinary things that can happen when ordinary people take action," UW President Mark Emmert said.

Members of the armed forces, both active and retired, as well as the general public are encouraged to attend the dedication. Ceremonies will begin at 10 a.m. with a parade down Memorial Way that will include bands, veterans groups and a military color guard.

Entirely funded by private contributions, the \$152,000 monument will be near two existing war memorials. The first, Memorial Way, begins at the Northeast 45th Street entrance to the university and was created with 58 London planetrees honoring UW faculty, students and alumni who died in World War I. At the end of Memorial Way, just beyond the traffic circle where the Medal of Honor memorial will be, is the campus flagpole bearing names of faculty, staff, students and alumni who died in World War II.

Mike Magrath, a UW visiting scholar in sculpture and public art, led the team that designed the monument. It includes Heidi Wastweet, a Seattle sculptor, and Dodi Fredericks, a landscape architect.

Their design will be anchored by a five-point star, similar to the medal star, inset into the traffic circle. At the north point of the circle will be the "book stone." On the exterior, it's a plain serpentine stone that sat for years, largely ignored, outside the UW sculpture studio on lower campus. But "split open like a book and polished," Wastweet said, "the stone glows like ordinary people courageous enough to do something extraordinary for their fellow human beings."

The book stone includes each Medal of Honor recipient's name, rank, award year and years at UW. A basalt column in front of the stone will feature the face of Minerva, goddess of both wisdom and war also pictured on the medal. "We want to inspire students who walk around and through the memorial," Wastweet said. "We want them to think that if these alumni could do extraordinary feats, then they can, too."

Near those main rocks will be four sentinel stones surrounding one with bronze wording from the recipients' Medal citations. "We found that no image was as powerful as details of what those men did," Wastweet said.

Since 1862, when the Medal of Honor was first awarded, more than 3,467 U.S. soldiers have received it, at least 620 posthumously.

The UW memorial grew out of a Student Senate motion that set aside a proposed memorial to UW alumnus Gregory "Pappy" Boyington, class of 1934, a Marine fighter pilot who downed 28 enemy planes before the Japanese captured and sent him to a prisoner-of-war camp. The Senate favored a memorial recognizing all UW Medal of Honor recipients.

The other seven UW alumni who have received the medal are:

Deming Bronson, First Lieutenant, U.S. Army

Wounded by a hand grenade and a bullet, Bronson nevertheless led his unit in capturing enemy positions near Eclisfontaine, France, in 1918. At the UW, Bronson was a forestry major and played Husky football from 1912 to 1916.

Robert E. Galer, Brigadier General, U.S. Marine Corps

As a major in 1942, Galer shot down 11 enemy aircraft in 29 days. He himself was shot down four times during World War II and the Korean War. Galer retired as a brigadier general in 1957.

Bruce Crandall, Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army

On Nov. 14, 1965, while under extreme fire in Vietnam, Crandall nevertheless landed his Army helicopter 14 times and supervised loading of more than 70 seriously wounded soldiers. It

inspired other helicopter pilots to do the same. Like other medal recipients, Crandall earned not only the Medal of Honor but several other awards, such as the Purple Heart.

John D. "Bud" Hawk, Sergeant, U.S. Army

Hawk was wounded in northern France on Aug. 20, 1944. He was largely responsible for crushing two German attempts to escape from the Falaise Pocket in Normandy and for taking more than 500 prisoners, all while wounded from a bullet to the thigh.

Robert Leisy, Second Lieutenant, U.S. Army

On Dec. 2, 1969, North Vietnamese soldiers in much greater numbers attacked Leisy's unit. Leisy used his own body to shield his fellow soldiers from a rocket grenade. Then, while mortally wounded, he continued to direct his men, refusing medical treatment until others were cared for. Leisy was 24 at the time of his death. He had been in Vietnam less than three months.

William Kenzo Nakamura, Private First Class, U.S. Army

Twice on July 4, 1944, Nakamura singlehandedly attacked German machine gunners in Italy so his platoon could be freed from pinned-down positions. During his second effort, he was killed. Nakamura had volunteered for the Army after the U.S. government forced his family and other Japanese-Americans on the West coast to move to internment camps.

Archie Van Winkle, Staff Sergeant, U.S. Marine Corps

In November 1950, Van Winkle led a charge through North Korean gunfire. One bullet shattered his arm, and a hand grenade exploded against his chest. Refusing to be evacuated, Van Winkle continued shouting orders and encouragement to his men. The platoon eventually repulsed a fanatical enemy attack.

Funding for the memorial included a match program with TriWest Healthcare Alliance and the Bruce and Jolene McCaw Family Foundation.

"The monument honors those who fought not for medals but to save the lives of their comrades. Their courage and selflessness reflects the American spirit," said David J. McIntyre Jr., president and chief executive officer of TriWest.

For more information about the memorial, visit www.valor.washington.edu.

