



Richard M. Daley, Mayor



CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF AVIATION



Rosemarie S. Andolino, Commissioner

News Release

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MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS ARRIVE AT O'HARE AND MIDWAY FOR WEEKLONG CONVENTION IN CHICAGO

CHICAGO – Nearly 60 Congressional Medal of Honor (MOH) recipients, along with their spouses, family members and military escorts, arrived at O'Hare and Midway International Airports this week to attend the Congressional Medal of Honor Society's annual convention being held at several locations in Chicago.

The Medal of Honor is the nation's highest military award presented for valor in combat and there are fewer than 100 living MOH veterans today.

These extraordinary individuals were greeted with a warm Chicago welcome by members of the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA), and saluted by the Chicago Police Department (CPD), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Honor Guard and the United Service Organizations (USO). Each recipient was presented with a yellow rose and a commemorative U.S. Flag and will have a military escort for the entire duration of their Chicago visit.

Airlines at O'Hare and Midway also helped to create lasting memories by acknowledging each recipient onboard the aircraft and in the gate areas upon arrival.

"On behalf of Mayor Richard M. Daley and the Chicago Department of Aviation, we are honored to have the opportunity to welcome these distinguished heroes to Chicago," said CDA Commissioner Rosemarie S. Andolino. "Thanks to our airline and airport partners, we are able to provide a memorable experience for the veterans, their friends and family, as well as O'Hare and Midway passengers."

An exhibit honoring Illinois MOH recipients from the Civil War to the present is on display at O'Hare in Terminal 2, near the Butch O'Hare aircraft through the end of September.

"The City of Chicago's commitment to the recipients, their family and guests and the entire military community has been outstanding," said Laura Anderson, Convention Coordinator and Owner and CEO of Winning Systems, Inc. "Military service and the spirit of our theme 'Commit to Courage', is truly a part of the fabric of Chicago."

The Congressional Medal of Honor Society's convention began Tuesday, September 15 and runs through Saturday, September 19.

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The Chicago Department of Aviation is self-supporting, using no local or state tax dollars for operations or capital improvements at O'Hare and Midway International airports. Together, Chicago's airports generate more than \$45 billion in annual economic activity and create 540,000 jobs for the region. Please visit www.flychicago.com to learn more about the Chicago Department of Aviation.

The O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP), introduced by Mayor Richard M. Daley in June 2001, transforms O'Hare's airfield from an outdated system of intersecting runways into a modern parallel runway configuration. The program will reduce overall delays at the Airport by 79 percent, and bad weather delays by 95 percent. It will create 195,000 new jobs and \$18 billion in additional economic activity each year. Please visit www.oharemodernization.org to learn more about the OMP.

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Editor's note: Two photos with captions attached.

PHOTO 1



PHOTO CAPTION: U.S. Army World War II Second Lieutenant and Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Van T. Barfoot is greeted by his military escort upon arriving at O'Hare International Airport on September 14, 2009. Lieutenant Barfoot is one of approximately 60 recipients who are traveling to Chicago for the Congressional Medal of Honor Society's annual convention, September 15 through 19, 2009.

Photo credit: Chicago Department of Aviation

PHOTO 2



PHOTO CAPTION: (pictured from left to right) Vietnam War Congressional Medal of Honor recipients U.S. Marine Corps Gunnery Sergeant Allan Jay Kellog, Jr. from Hawaii; U.S. Navy Petty Officer Michael Thornton from Montgomery, Texas; and U.S. Army First Sergeant David H. McNerney from Crosby, Texas, in Terminal 2 at O'Hare International Airport on September 14, 2009. The three veterans traveled to Chicago for the Congressional Medal of Honor Society's annual convention, September 15 through 19, 2009.

Photo credit: Chicago Department of Aviation