

# Inaugural Address by President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

THE WHITE HOUSE



The United States Capitol

11:52 AM EST

THE PRESIDENT: Chief Justice Roberts, Vice President Harris, Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Vice President Pence, distinguished guests, and my fellow Americans.

This is America's day.

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# American Legion Spirit of Service recipients exemplify the best in us



(Photo by Alex Wroblewski)

## American Legion Spirit of Service

The American Legion on Jan. 21 hosted a virtual award ceremony to honor the recipients of the Spirit of Service Award, the National Law Enforcement of the Year Award and the National Firefighter of the Year Award. Watch the ceremony [here](#).

These honors are awarded to those who have selflessly distinguished themselves over and above their normal duties predominately through community service activities and professional achievement. These awards are typically presented during The American Legion's National Convention by a Medal of Honor recipient.

Since the pandemic cancelled the national convention, this virtual ceremony paid tribute to the honorees.

"This award is so significant," said National Security Commission Chairman Steven A. Brennan, who presented the awards during Thursday's ceremony. "To me, these are most significant awards in The American Legion. Your names will forever be written in the book of excellence."

Spirit of Service recipients are nominated and chosen by their branch of service for their community service efforts.

"For the Spirit of Service awards, it embodies their branch of service and core values," said Brennan. "Not only are they serving their military with pride, but in their free time, they are dedicating massive amounts of time to do things for their community."

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# Senate confirms Austin as nation's first Black Defense secretary



The Senate confirmed retired Army Gen. Lloyd J. Austin, shown during his Senate confirmation hearing, to be Defense secretary. (Jim Lo Scalzo / Associated Press)

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lloyd J. Austin, a West Point graduate who rose to the Army's elite ranks and marched through racial barriers in a 41-year career, won Senate confirmation Friday to become the nation's first Black secretary of defense.

The 93-2 vote gave President Joe Biden his second Cabinet member; [Avril Haines](#) was confirmed on Wednesday as the first woman to serve as director of national intelligence. Biden is expected to win approval for others on his national security team in coming days, including Antony Blinken as secretary of state.

Biden is looking [for Austin](#) to restore stability atop the Pentagon, which went through two Senate-confirmed secretaries of defense and four who held the post on an interim basis during the Trump administration. The only senators who voted against Austin were Republicans Mike Lee of Utah and Josh Hawley of Missouri.

Before heading to the Pentagon, Austin wrote on Twitter that he is especially proud to be the first Black secretary of defense. "Let's get to work," he wrote.

And a short time later he arrived at the Pentagon's River Entrance, where he was greeted by holdover Deputy Defense Secretary David Norquist, who has been the acting secretary since Wednesday, and Army Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He didn't stop to answer reporters' questions but said he looks forward to dealing with the press.

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## **POW/MIA Update:**

This week, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency released the following announcements. Click on the links to read more:

### **4 Things to Know About POW/MIA Recognition Day**



You Are Not Forgotten – that's the central phrase behind the POW/MIA remembrance movement which honors America's prisoners of war, those who are still missing in action and their families.

Many of our service members suffered as prisoners of war during several decades of varying conflicts. While some of them made it home, tens of thousands more never did.

Here are four things to know about how this important movement got started, what it means and how you can help recognize it.

POW/MIA Recognition Day is commemorated on the third Friday of every September, a date that's not associated with any particular war. In 1979, Congress and the president passed resolutions making it official after the families of the more than 2,500 Vietnam War POW/MIAs pushed for full accountability.

- 130,201 World War II service members were imprisoned; 14,072 them died
- 7,140 Korean War service members were imprisoned; 2,701 of them died
- 725 Vietnam War service members were imprisoned; 64 of them died
- 37 service members were imprisoned during conflicts since 1991, including both Gulf wars; none are still in captivity

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<a href="#">Announcement</a>
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## Announcing TRICARE's New Lower Back Pain and Physical Therapy Demonstration

Please visit the link below to access a new toolkit with important beneficiary information about TRICARE's new Lower Back Pain and Physical Therapy Demonstration, available in 10 demonstration states. The demonstration is available to beneficiaries who live and receive care in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, and Virginia.

This toolkit contains information and turn-key products to spread awareness about the no-cost physical therapy visits for low-back pain:

### [TRICARE Low Back Pain & Physical Therapy Toolkit](#)

Eligible beneficiaries must:

- Reside in and receive care in one of the following states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, or Virginia
- Have a new primary diagnosis of low back pain, made after the demonstration starts
- Have a referral from a TRICARE-authorized provider. The referral must be to an in-network TRICARE-authorized provider (Beneficiaries using TRICARE For Life will only need to see a TRICARE-authorized provider)

*The demonstration runs from Jan. 1, 2021 through Dec. 31, 2023.*

*TRICARE may terminate or extend the demonstration.*

## Legislative Issues

- Quality of Life for Servicemembers and their Families – We owe our military men and women a debt of gratitude we can never repay for all that they — and their families — sacrifice to serve our country. The American Legion supports a fully funded quality of life (Resolution No. 85, 2016)
- Ensure the Coast Guard is paid – The American Legion supports a fully funded United States Coast Guard (Resolution No. 23, 2016)
- Expedited Citizenship through Honorable Military Service – The American Legion supports measures to ensure the process of naturalization through military service is completed prior to discharge (Resolution No. 15, 2018)
- Cybersecurity and Critical Infrastructure – The American Legion supports refined processes and policies that will enhance interagency cybersecurity...and promulgation of best practices and standards, and to ensure the protection of critical infrastructure from cyber and other electronic attack. (Resolution No. 20, 2017)
- End the Forever Wars – The American Legion advocate for elevating diplomacy to build a better safer world (Resolution No. 22, 2020)

***Staff Activity:***

- Staff Hosted The American Legion Spirit of Service Award, National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year and the National Fire Fighter of the Year here in the nation's capital during the 2021 Inaugural Season.
- Staff participated in the Department of The Army's conference call as The American Legion Legacy Award information was briefed.

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Week ending 01/22/2021*