

Italian American Recipients of the Medal of Honor *Compiled by the Sons of Italy Commission for Social Justice*

The Medal of Honor is the highest military award for bravery in the U.S. It is conferred for “individual gallantry at the risk of life **above and beyond the call of duty.**” The Army, Air Force, and Navy each has its own distinctive Medal of Honor.

The act of bravery must be supported by the testimony of at least two eyewitnesses and recommendations must be made within defined time limits.

The Medal of Honor is presented by the President of the United States “in the name of the Congress of the United States.” For this reason it is sometimes called the U. S. Congressional Medal of Honor.

It is generally awarded for a deed of personal bravery or self-sacrifice only while the person in the Armed Forces of the United States, fighting an enemy of the United States, but can be given to a military person serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

To date, the Sons of Italy has identified 26 Italian Americans who have earned the Medal of Honor, beginning with U.S. Army Corporal George Ferrari who fought in the Indian Wars in 1869. Current research expects that number to increase.

ITALIAN AMERICAN MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

Lewis Albanese

John Basilone

Vito R. Bertoldo

Willibald C. Bianchi

Vincent R. Capodanno

Anthony Casamento

Jon R. Cavainani

Ralph Cheli

Joseph J. Cicchetti

Michael Colalillo

Peter J. Dalessandro

Anthony Peter Damato

Arthur F. DeFranzo

Luigi Palma DiCesnola

George Ferrari

Frank R. Fratellenico

Salvatore Giunta

Gary W. Martini

Gino J. Merli

Jared Monti

Frank J. Petrarca

Louis R. Rocco

Michael Valente

Humbert (Rocky) Versace

Robert M. Viale

Joseph Vittori