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Presidential Medal of Freedom

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Presidential Medal of Freedom

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is considered the U.S. government’s highest civilian honor. Awarded by the President, it is often presented to individuals to recognize a lifetime of significant achievements in the arts, public service, science, or other fields.

Created by President Harry S. Truman in 1945 as the Medal of Freedom, the medal was renamed by President John F. Kennedy in 1963 as the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Executive Order 11085 (February 22, 1963) allows the President to recognize “any person who has made an especially meritorious contribution to (1) the security or national interests of the United States, or (2) world peace, or (3) cultural or other significant public or private endeavors.”

The medal is a white star over a red pentagon, surrounded by five gold eagles. At the star’s center is a blue circle with 13 gold stars. The Presidential Medal of Freedom comes in two degrees, with the more prestigious version known as the Presidential Medal of Freedom “with distinction.”

There is no formal procedure for nominating and selecting recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. The President has wide latitude under Executive Order 11515 (March 13, 1970) to award the medal to “any person recommended to the President for award of the Medal or any person selected by the President upon his own initiative.” Selections often reflect the President’s political and personal interests.

Numerous Members of Congress have sent nominations to the President. Some Members have made floor remarks about potential or past recipients and introduced resolutions congratulating honorees or urging the President to recognize a specific individual.

Between 1963 and 2025, the Presidential Medal of Freedom was awarded 672 times to 669 individuals and one group (the Apollo 13 Mission Operations Team); two people (Ellsworth Bunker and Colin Powell) received the medal twice. This report contains a comprehensive list of honorees and indicates when a medal is known to have been awarded “with distinction.”

Contents

Introduction	1
Background	1
History	1
Design and Protocol	2
Nomination, Selection, and Presentation	3
Role for Members of Congress	3
Recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom	4
Related CRS Products	43

Figures

Figure 1. Presidential Medal of Freedom	2
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Tables

Table 1. Number of Presidential Medals of Freedom, by President	5
Table 2. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Joseph R. Biden Jr. (2021-Present).....	5
Table 3. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Donald J. Trump (2017-2021)	7
Table 4. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Barack H. Obama (2009-2017)	8
Table 5. Presidential Medals of Freedom: George W. Bush (2001-2009).....	11
Table 6. Presidential Medals of Freedom: William J. Clinton (1993-2001).....	13
Table 7. Presidential Medals of Freedom: George H.W. Bush (1989-1993).....	16
Table 8. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Ronald W. Reagan (1981-1989)	17
Table 9. Presidential Medals of Freedom: James E. Carter Jr. (1977-1981)	19
Table 10. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Gerald R. Ford Jr. (1974-1977)	21
Table 11. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Richard M. Nixon (1969-1974)	21
Table 12. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-1969)	22
Table 13. Presidential Medal of Freedom Recipients, 1963-2024.....	25

Contacts

Author Information.....	44
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Introduction

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is considered the U.S. government's highest civilian honor. Awarded by the President, it is often presented to individuals to recognize a lifetime of significant achievements in the arts, public service, science, or other fields.

This report describes the history of the medal, provides information about its design and related protocol, and discusses the nomination and selection process. It concludes with tables containing a comprehensive list of honorees since 1963.

Background

History

In July 1945, President Harry S. Truman issued an executive order, near the end of World War II, to create the Medal of Freedom. In establishing the award, he sought to honor civilians who “performed a meritorious act or service which has aided the United States” or one of its allies overseas during wartime, “and for which an award of another United States medal or decoration is considered inappropriate.”¹ During the Korean War, President Truman expanded the medal’s eligibility to include actions during “any period of national emergency.”² It was awarded thousands of times, mostly by federal officials other than the President.³

In his 1955 State of the Union address, President Dwight D. Eisenhower called for “awards of merit ... whereby we can honor our fellow citizens who make great contribution to the advancement of our civilization.”⁴ The House twice passed bills to create a Medal for Distinguished Civilian Achievement: H.R. 11923 in the 84th Congress⁵ and H.R. 488 in the 85th Congress.⁶ In each case, the Senate referred the bill to committee and took no further action.⁷

In 1963, President John F. Kennedy issued Executive Order 11085 to modify the Medal of Freedom, including by giving it a new name: the Presidential Medal of Freedom. It would now be awarded solely by the President to “any person who has made an especially meritorious contribution to (1) the security or national interests of the United States, or (2) world peace, or (3) cultural or other significant public or private endeavors.”⁸

President Kennedy said at the time that

in a period when the national government must call upon an increasing portion of the talents and energies of its citizens, it is clearly appropriate to provide ways to recognize and reward

¹ Executive Order 9586, “The Medal of Freedom,” 10 *Federal Register* 8523, July 6, 1945.

² Executive Order 10336, “Amendment of Executive Order No. 9586 of July 6, 1945, Establishing the Medal of Freedom,” 17 *Federal Register* 2957, April 3, 1952.

³ Bruce Wetterau, *The Presidential Medal of Freedom: Winners and Their Achievements* (Washington: Congressional Quarterly Inc., 1996), p. 9.

⁴ “Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union” (January 6, 1955) in U.S. National Archives and Records Service, Office of the Federal Register, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 1955, pp. 7-30.

⁵ *Congressional Record*, vol. 102, part 9 (July 2, 1956), p. 11609.

⁶ *Congressional Record*, vol. 104, part 11 (July 23, 1958), p. 14794.

⁷ *Congressional Record*, vol. 102, part 9 (July 3, 1956), p. 11678 and vol. 104, part 11 (July 24, 1958), p. 14895.

⁸ Executive Order 11085, “The Presidential Medal of Freedom,” 28 *Federal Register* 1759, February 22, 1963. Also, in the *United States Code* at 5 U.S.C. §4504 note.

the work of persons, within and without the government, who contribute significantly to the quality of American life.⁹

On July 4, 1963, President Kennedy announced the first slate of 31 honorees.¹⁰ President Lyndon B. Johnson presented the initial Presidential Medals of Freedom two weeks after President Kennedy's assassination, with two posthumous additions to the list: Pope John XXIII and President Kennedy.¹¹

Design and Protocol

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is a white star over a red pentagon, surrounded by five gold eagles. At the star's center is a blue circle with 13 gold stars.

Harry D. Temple, the head of the Army's Institute of Heraldry, designed the medal with input from President Kennedy and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy.¹² A contemporary White House document described the white star—a symbol displayed on military vehicles—as “the identifying emblem of United States elements in the defense of freedom” and “recognized universally as a symbol of our selfless determination to maintain the freedom and democracy of mankind.”¹³

The Presidential Medal of Freedom comes in two degrees, with the more prestigious version known as the Presidential Medal of Freedom “with distinction.”

At the first White House awards ceremony, President Johnson described the Presidential Medal of Freedom as “the Nation's highest civil honor.”¹⁴ It has also been described as “the

Figure 1. Presidential Medal of Freedom
Front of the medal awarded to Rosa Parks in 1996



Source: Library of Congress.

⁹ “Statement by the President Upon Issuing Order Relating to the Medal of Freedom” (February 22, 1963) in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy*, 1963, pp. 209-210.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 210 (in note).

¹¹ “Remarks With Under Secretary of State George W. Ball at the Presentation of the Medal of Freedom Awards” (December 6, 1963) in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson*, 1963-1964, Book I, pp. 29-34.

¹² Jenifer V. Buckman, “H.D. Temple, Military Author, Designer, Dies; Heraldry Expert Did Redesign of Medal, Chronicled History,” *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, January 27, 2004, p. B7; Wetterau, *Presidential Medal of Freedom*, p. 15.

¹³ “Symbolism of the Design of the Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction and the Presidential Medal of Freedom,” n.d., series 8, box 102, folder 6, no. 21, President's Office Files, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, at <https://www.jfklibrary.org/asset-viewer/archives/JFKPOF/102/JFKPOF-102-006>.

¹⁴ “Remarks With Under Secretary of State George W. Ball at the Presentation of the Medal of Freedom Awards,” p. 30.

civilian equivalent of the Congressional Medal of Honor”¹⁵ and “the highest civil award that can be presented by the President of the United States.”¹⁶

Guides to etiquette and precedence typically list the Presidential Medal of Freedom first among nonmilitary U.S. awards.¹⁷

Nomination, Selection, and Presentation

There is no formal procedure for nominations or the evaluation of potential recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom.¹⁸

The President can award the medal to “any person recommended to the President for award of the Medal or any person selected by the President upon his own initiative.”¹⁹ Selections often reflect the President’s political and personal interests.

The medal is often, though not always, presented at an annual White House ceremony.²⁰

Role for Members of Congress

Numerous Members have sent nominations to the President, often in a formal written letter.²¹

Some Members have also made floor remarks and inserted statements into the *Congressional Record* about potential or past recipients.²²

¹⁵ “Presidential Medal of Freedom” in *The Presidency A to Z*, 5th ed., eds. Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley (Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press, 2013), pp. 451-452.

¹⁶ Lawrence M. Watson, *The Presidential Medal of Freedom* (Claymont, DE: Orders and Medals Society of America, 2014), p. 39.

¹⁷ Mary Mel French, *United States Protocol: The Guide to Official Diplomatic Etiquette* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010), pp. 271, 275; Department of the Army, *Guide to the Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia*, Pamphlet 670-1, January 26, 2021, p. 260, at https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/ARN30948-PAM_670-1-000-WEB-1.pdf#page=277; and Article 5307 in Navy Personnel Command, *United States Navy Uniform Regulations*, NAVPERS 15665J, at <https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/References/US-Navy-Uniforms/Uniform-Regulations/Chapter-5/5301-Awards/#5307>.

¹⁸ Juliet Eilperin, “One of the Last Washington Mysteries: How to Get the Medal of Freedom,” *The Washington Post*, November 23, 2015, at https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/one-of-the-last-washington-mysteries-how-to-get-the-medal-of-freedom/2015/11/23/d3351fa2-91f3-11e5-b5e4-279b4501e8a6_story.html.

¹⁹ Executive Order 11515, “Terminating Certain Bodies Established by the President,” 35 *Federal Register* 4543, March 13, 1970. This executive order eliminated a nomination process through the now-defunct Distinguished Civilian Service Awards Board that had been created in President Kennedy’s 1963 executive order.

²⁰ For example, see videos available online from the 1981 ceremony (at <https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/video/medal-freedom-ceremony-president-reagan-gives-remarks-and-presents-awards-east-room>) and the 2022 ceremony (at <https://www.c-span.org/video/?521521-1/presidential-medal-freedom-ceremony>).

²¹ For example, see Rep. Lee H. Hamilton, “Nominating Dante B. Fascell for the Presidential Medal of Freedom,” extension of remarks, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 144 (October 21, 1998), p. E2287; Sen. Roger Wicker, “Miss. Delegation Requests Presidential Medal of Freedom for Civil Rights Leader Medgar Evers,” press release, November 4, 2016, at <https://www.wicker.senate.gov/2016/11/miss-delegation-requests-presidential-medal-of-freedom-for-civil-rights-leader-medgar-evers>; and Rep. Joaquin Castro, “Congressman Castro Recommends Veteran Advocates Le Roy and Rosie Torres for the Presidential Medal of Freedom,” press release, January 31, 2023, at <https://castro.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/congressman-castro-recommends-veteran-advocates-le-roy-and-roisie-torres-for-the-presidential-medal-of-freedom>.

²² For example, see Sen. Max Cleland, “Senate Resolution 23—Expressing the Sense of the Senate That the President Should Award the Presidential Medal of Freedom Posthumously to Dr. Benjamin Elijah Mays in Honor of His Distinguished Career as An Educator, Civil and Human Rights Leader, and Public Theologian,” remarks in the Senate, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 147 (February 14, 2001), pp. S1434-S1435; “Expressing the Sense of (continued...)”

In addition, some Members have introduced resolutions urging the President to recognize specific people with the award,²³ and to congratulate or memorialize honorees.²⁴

In recent years, some Members have also asked the President to revoke a previously awarded medal.²⁵ President Barack H. Obama said in 2015 there was “no precedent for revoking the medal.”²⁶

Recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom

The Presidential Medal of Freedom was awarded 672 times between 1963 and 2025.²⁷

The recipients included 669 individuals and one group, the Apollo 13 Mission Operations Team.²⁸ Two people received the medal twice: Ellsworth Bunker (in 1963 and 1967) and Colin Powell (in 1991 and 1993).

An academic analysis of recipients through 2013 found the most common primary area of achievement was political and public service (about 27% of recipients), followed by art, acting, and music (about 15%) and academia and science (about 14%). Additional areas of achievement included civil rights (about 9% of recipients), humanitarianism and philanthropy (about 6%), military service (about 6%), and journalism and broadcasting (about 6%). Smaller numbers of recipients were recognized for achievements in writing and literature, athletics, labor, business, religion, conservation and environmentalism, and architecture and engineering.²⁹

Table 1 shows the total number of medals awarded by each President. An initial slate of 31 honorees announced by President Kennedy received their medals from his successor, President Johnson, and are included in the latter’s total.

Congress That the President Posthumously Award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Harry W. Colmery,” House debate, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 150 (July 6, 2004), pp. H5162-H5165; Rep. Barbara Comstock, “In Honor of Bonnie Carroll, Recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom for Her Commitment to Healing Families of Fallen Members of the Armed Services,” extension of remarks, *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 161 (December 1, 2015), p. E1684; and Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, “Recognizing Dr. Eduardo J. Padron on Receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom,” *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 162 (December 7, 2016), p. H7285.

²³ For example, see S.Res. 23 (107th Cong.) for Benjamin Elijah Mays, H.Con.Res. 313 (108th Cong.) for Pope John Paul II, S.Con.Res. 91 (109th Cong.) for Satchel Paige, H.Res. 926 (114th Cong.) for Henrietta Lacks, and S.Con.Res. 20 (116th Cong.) for Harry W. Colmery.

²⁴ For example, see S.Res. 310 (107th Cong.) for Justin Dart Jr., H.Res. 708 (111th Cong.) for Nancy Brinker, H.Res. 1743 (111th Cong.) for Gerda Weissmann Klein, and S.Res. 61 (117th Cong.) for George P. Shultz.

²⁵ H.R. 4354 (114th Cong.) and H.R. 6810 (115th Cong.) expressed the sense of Congress that Bill Cosby’s medal, awarded in 2002, should be revoked.

²⁶ Krishnadev Calamur, “Obama: ‘No Precedent’ To Revoke Bill Cosby’s Presidential Medal Of Freedom,” National Public Radio, July 15, 2015, at <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2015/07/15/423258004/obama-no-precedent-to-revoke-bill-cosby-s-presidential-medal-of-honor>.

²⁷ To compile this list, CRS searched *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States* volumes for 1963 to 2016, and the *Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents* for 2017 to the present, for mentions of the medal. Additional recipients were identified using the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, contemporaneous news reports, and White House press releases. In compiling this list, CRS attempted to be thorough; however, the list of medals in this report may not be comprehensive.

²⁸ While awarding the medal to the Apollo 13 Mission Operations Team, President Richard M. Nixon mentioned five individuals: Sig Sjöberg, Glynn Lunney, Milt Windler, Gerald Griffin, and Gene Krantz. See “Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Apollo 13 Mission Operations Team in Houston” (April 18, 1970) in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Richard M. Nixon*, 1970, pp. 366-369.

²⁹ Kyle C. Kopko et al., “The Politics of the Presidential Medal of Freedom: A Fifty-Year Analysis, 1963-2013,” *New England Journal of Political Science*, vol. 8, no. 2 (Fall 2015), pp. 156-184. See Table 4, pp. 174-175.

Table 1. Number of Presidential Medals of Freedom, by President

President	Number Awarded
Lyndon B. Johnson	89 ^a
Richard M. Nixon	28
Gerald R. Ford Jr.	28
James E. Carter Jr.	34
Ronald W. Reagan	86
George H.W. Bush	38
William J. Clinton	89
George W. Bush	82
Barack H. Obama	118
Donald J. Trump	24
Joseph R. Biden Jr.	56 ^b
Total	672

Sources: CRS analysis based on information from the *Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents*, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*, *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, news reports, and White House press releases.

Notes: Current as of January 2025.

- a. Includes 31 honorees selected by President John F. Kennedy before his assassination.
- b. Incumbent.

Tables 2-12 list honorees by the President who presented their medal. Recipients are listed in alphabetical order by last name.³⁰ The recipients who are known to have been awarded the medal “with distinction” are marked with a table note (^a).³¹

Table 2. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Joseph R. Biden Jr. (2021-Present)

Name	Year
José Andrés	2025
Simone Biles	2022
Michael Bloomberg	2024
Bono	2025
Greg Boyle	2024
Simone Campbell	2022

³⁰ Names are generally presented as they appear in biographical reference sources. For names that varied from source to source, CRS typically selected the most common option. For example, Babe Ruth (posthumously recognized in 2018) appears under that name in the *Almanac of Famous People*, *American Decades*, *Scribner Encyclopedia of American Lives*, and *St. James Encyclopedia of Popular Culture*, though he is “George Herman Ruth” in the *Dictionary of American Biography* and *Merriam Webster’s Biographical Dictionary*, and “George Herman Ruth Jr.” in the *Encyclopedia of World Biography Online*.

³¹ Information about whether the Presidential Medal of Freedom was awarded “with distinction” comes from Glenn P. Hogan, *The Presidential Medal of Freedom* (Ann Arbor, MI: Glenn P. Hogan, 1996), pp. 155-156; Candace Elizabeth Todd, “Designating Heroes: Theory and Analysis of Presidential Epideictic Awards” (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1998), pp. 189-203; Wetterau, *Presidential Medal of Freedom*; and contemporaneous presidential remarks. The 55 instances of “with distinction” noted in this report may not be comprehensive.

Name	Year
Ashton B. Carter	2025
Hillary Rodham Clinton	2025
James Clyburn	2024
Elizabeth Dole	2024
Phil Donahue	2024
Medgar Evers	2024
Michael J. Fox	2025
Juliet García	2022
Gabrielle Giffords	2022
Tim Gill	2025
Jane Goodall	2025
Albert Gore Jr.	2024
Fred Gray Sr.	2022
Fannie Lou Hamer	2025
Steve Jobs	2022
Magic Johnson	2025
Clarence B. Jones	2024
Alexander Karloutsos	2022
Robert Francis Kennedy	2025
John Kerry	2024
Khizr Khan	2022
Ralph Lauren	2025
Frank R. Lautenberg	2024
Katie Ledecky	2024
Opal Lee	2024
Sandra Lindsay	2022
John McCain	2022
Lionel Messi	2025
Diane Nash	2022
Bill Nye	2025
Ellen Ochoa	2024
Nancy Pelosi	2024
Megan Rapinoe	2022
Cecile Richards	2024
Jane Rigby	2024
Teresa Romero	2024
George W. Romney	2025

Name	Year
David M. Rubenstein	2025
Judy Shepard	2024
Alan Simpson	2022
George Soros	2025
George Stevens Jr.	2025
Jens Stoltenberg	2024
Jim Thorpe	2024
Richard Trumka	2022
Wilma L. Vaught	2022
Denzel Washington	2022 ^a
Anna Wintour	2025
Michelle Yeoh	2024
Raul Yzaguirre	2022

Sources: *Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents*; White House, “President Biden Announces Recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom,” press release, January 4, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2025/01/04/president-biden-announces-recipients-of-the-presidential-medal-of-freedom-3>.

Note: List current as of January 2025.

a. Announced in July 2022, presented in January 2025.

Table 3. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Donald J. Trump (2017-2021)

Name	Year
Miriam Adelson	2018
Bob Cousy	2019
Dan Gable	2020
Orrin G. Hatch	2018
Lou Holtz	2020
Jim Jordan	2021
Jack Keane	2020
Arthur Betz Laffer	2019
Rush Limbaugh	2020
Edwin Meese	2019
Devin Nunes	2021
Alan Cedric Page	2018
Roger Penske	2019
Gary Jim Player	2021
Elvis Presley	2018
Mariano Rivera	2019
Babe Ruth	2018

Name	Year
Jim Ryun	2020
Antonin Scalia	2018
Annika Sorenstam	2021
Roger Thomas Staubach	2018
Jerry West	2019
Tiger Woods	2019
Mildred Didrikson Zaharias	2021

Source: *Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents.*

Table 4. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Barack H. Obama (2009-2017)

Name	Year
Kareem Abdul-Jabbar	2016
John H. Adams	2011
Alvin Ailey	2014
Madeleine Albright	2012
Isabel Allende	2014
Maya Angelou	2011
Ernie Banks	2013
Yogi Berra	2015
Joseph R. Biden Jr. ^a	2017
Ben Bradlee	2013
Nancy Brinker	2009
Tom Brokaw	2014
Warren Buffett	2011
George H.W. Bush	2011
Bonnie Carroll	2015
James Earl Chaney	2014
Shirley Chisholm	2015
William J. Clinton	2013
Elouise Cobell	2016
Robert De Niro	2016
Ellen DeGeneres	2016
John David Dingell	2014
John Michael Doar	2012
Mildred Spiewak Dresselhaus	2014
Bob Dylan	2012
Emilio Estefan Jr.	2015

Name	Year
Gloria Estefan	2015
William H. Foegen	2012
Billy Frank	2015
Richard Lawrence Garwin	2016
Bill Gates	2016
Melinda Gates	2016
Robert M. Gates	2011
Frank O. Gehry	2016
John Glenn	2012
Andrew Goodman	2014
Pedro Jose Greer Jr.	2009
Lee H. Hamilton	2015
Margaret Hamilton	2016
Tom Hanks	2016
Suzanne Shown Harjo	2014
Stephen Hawking	2009
Gordon Hirabayashi	2012
Grace Hopper	2016
Dolores Huerta	2012
Daniel Inouye	2013
Jasper Johns	2011
Katherine Johnson	2015
Michael Jordan	2016
Daniel Kahneman	2013
Jan Karski	2012
Jack French Kemp	2009
Edward M. Kennedy	2009
Ethel Kennedy	2014
Billie Jean King	2009
Gerda Weissmann Klein	2011
John Robert Lewis	2011
Maya Lin	2016
Tom Little	2011
Juliette Gordon Low	2012
Joseph E. Lowery	2009
Richard Green Lugar	2013
Loretta Lynn	2013

Name	Year
Yo-Yo Ma	2011
Willie Mays	2015
Joseph Medicine Crow	2009
Sylvia Mendez	2011
Angela Merkel	2011
Lorne Michaels	2016
Barbara Mikulski	2015
Abner Joseph Mikva	2014
Harvey Milk	2009
Patsy Takemoto Mink	2014
Newton Minow	2016
Mario Molina	2013
Toni Morrison	2012
Stan Musial	2011
Sandra Day O'Connor	2009
Eduardo Padrón	2016
Shimon Peres	2012
Itzhak Perlman	2015
Sidney Poitier	2009
Robert Redford	2016
Sally K. Ride	2013
Chita Rivera	2009
Mary Robinson	2009
Diana Ross	2016
Janet D. Rowley	2009
Edward Roybal	2014
William Doyle Ruckelshaus	2015
Bill Russell	2011
Bayard Rustin	2013
Arturo Sandoval	2013
Michael Henry Schwerner	2014
Vin Scully	2016
Charlie Sifford	2014
Dean Smith	2013
Jean Kennedy Smith	2011
Robert M. Solow	2014
Stephen Sondheim	2015

Name	Year
Steven Spielberg	2015
Bruce Springsteen	2016
Gloria Steinem	2013
John Paul Stevens	2012
Meryl Streep	2014
Barbra Streisand	2015
Pat Summitt	2012
John J. Sweeney	2011
James Taylor	2015
Marlo Thomas	2014
Desmond Tutu	2009
Cicely Tyson	2016
C.T. Vivian	2013
Patricia M. Wald	2013
Oprah Winfrey	2013
Stevie Wonder	2014
Minoru Yasui	2015
Muhammad Yunus	2009

Source: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States.*

a. Medal known to be awarded “with distinction.”

Table 5. Presidential Medals of Freedom: George W. Bush (2001-2009)

Name	Year
Hank Aaron	2002
Muhammad Ali	2005
Robert LeRoy Bartley	2003
Jacques Barzun	2003
Gary Becker	2007
Oscar Elias Biscet	2007
Tony Blair	2009
L. Paul Bremer	2004
Edward W. Brooke	2004
Carol Burnett	2005
Ben Carson	2008
Vinton G. Cerf	2005
Julia Child	2003
Roberto Clemente	2003
Van Cliburn	2003

Name	Year
Francis Collins	2007
Ruth Johnson Colvin	2006
Robert Conquest	2005
Bill Cosby	2002
Ryan C. Crocker	2009
Doris Day	2004
Placido Domingo	2002
Peter F. Drucker	2002
Anthony S. Fauci	2008
Norman C. Francis	2006
Aretha Franklin	2005
Tommy R. Franks	2004
Katharine Graham	2002
Alan Greenspan	2005
Vartan Gregorian	2004
Andy Griffith	2005
Gilbert Melville Grosvenor	2004
Paul Harvey	2005
Vaclav Havel	2003
Donald A. Henderson	2002
Charlton Heston	2003
Gordon B. Hinckley	2004
Benjamin L. Hooks	2007
John Howard	2009
Henry Hyde	2007
Pope John Paul II	2004
Paul Johnson	2006
Robert E. Kahn	2005
B.B. King	2006
Irving William Kristol	2002
Brian Lamb	2007
Tom Lantos	2008
Estee Lauder	2004
Joshua Lederberg	2006
Harper Lee	2007
Nelson Mandela	2002
David McCullough	2006

Name	Year
Norman Yoshio Mineta	2006
Gillespie V. ("Sonny") Montgomery	2005
Gordon E. Moore	2002
Rita Moreno	2004
Richard B. Myers	2005
Jack Nicklaus	2005
Buck O'Neil	2006
Peter Pace	2008
Arnold Palmer	2004
Arnall Patz	2004
Norman Podhoretz	2004
Nancy Reagan	2002
George Islay MacNeill Robertson	2003
Frank Robinson	2005
Fred Rogers	2002
A.M. Rosenthal	2002
Paul Rusesabagina	2005
William L. Safire	2006
Donna Shalala	2008
Natan Sharansky	2006
Laurence H. Silberman	2008
Ellen Johnson Sirleaf	2007
Edward Teller	2003
George Tenet	2004
Dave Thomas	2003
Alvaro Uribe	2009
Byron R. White	2003
James Q. Wilson	2003
John Wooden	2003
Walter Wriston	2004

Source: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States.*

Table 6. Presidential Medals of Freedom: William J. Clinton (1993-2001)

Name	Year
Arnold Aronson	1998
Arthur Ashe	1993

Name	Year
Brooke Astor	1998
Lloyd Bentsen	1999
Joseph Bernardin	1996
Herbert “Herblock” Block	1994
James Scott Brady	1996
William J. Brennan Jr.	1993
Edgar M. Bronfman Sr.	1999
James E. Burke	2000
James E. Carter Jr.	1999
Rosalynn Carter	1999
John Hubbard Chafee	2000
Peggy Charren	1995
Cesar Chavez	1994
Wesley Clark	2000
William T. Coleman Jr.	1995
Robert Coles	1998
Joan Ganz Cooney	1995
William James Crowe	2000
Justin Dart Jr.	1998
Bob Dole	1997
Marjory Stoneman Douglas	1993
Evelyn Dubrow	1999
Marian Wright Edelman	2000
James Farmer	1998
Dante Bruno Fascell	1998
Maria Isolina Ferre	1999
Zachary Fisher	1998
Arthur Sherwood Flemming	1994
Gerald R. Ford Jr.	1999
John Hope Franklin	1995
J. William Fulbright	1993
Millard Fuller	1996
John Kenneth Galbraith	2000
James P. Grant	1994
David A. Hamburg	1996
Dorothy Irene Height	1994
Frances Hesselbein	1998

Name	Year
Leon A. Higginbotham Jr.	1995
George G. Higgins	2000
Oliver W. Hill	1999
Jesse Jackson	2000
Mildred Jeffrey	2000
Frank Johnson Jr.	1995
John H. Johnson	1996
Barbara Jordan	1994
Max M. Kampelman	1999
Lane Kirkland	1994
Helmut Kohl	1999
C. Everett Koop	1995
Fred Korematsu	1998
Mathilde Krim	2000
Eugene M. Lang	1996
Sol Myron Linowitz	1998
Wilma Mankiller	1998
Thurgood Marshall	1993
George Stanley McGovern	2000
Bob Michel	1994
George John Mitchell	1999
Daniel Patrick Moynihan	2000
Margaret Murie	1998
Gaylord Nelson	1995
Jan Nowak	1996
Mario G. Obledo	1998
Antonia Pantoja	1996
Rosa Parks	1996
William James Perry	1997
Colin Powell ^a	1993
Joseph L. Rauh Jr.	1993
Martha Raye	1993
Walter Philip Reuther	1995
Cruz Reynoso	2000
Elliot Richardson	1998
David Rockefeller	1998
James W. Rouse	1995

Name	Year
Ginetta Sagan	1996
John Shalikashvili	1997
Albert Shanker	1998
Sargent Shriver	1994
Aung San Suu Kyi	2000
Gardner C. Taylor	2000
Mo Udall	1996
William C. Velasquez	1995
Lew R. Wasserman	1995
Edgar Wayburn	1999
Simon Wiesenthal	2000
John Minor Wisdom	1993
Elmo R. Zumwalt	1998

Source: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States.*

- a. Medal known to be awarded “with distinction.”

Table 7. Presidential Medals of Freedom: George H.W. Bush (1989-1993)

Name	Year
James Addison Baker III	1991
Lucille Ball	1989
David Brinkley	1992
William F. Buckley Jr.	1991
Johnny Carson	1992
Dick Cheney	1991
Javier Perez de Cuellar	1991
C. Douglas Dillon	1989
James Harold Doolittle	1989
Luis A. Ferre	1991
Ella Fitzgerald	1992
Betty Ford	1991
Hannah Holborn Gray	1991
Friedrich August von Hayek	1991
Audrey Hepburn	1992
George F. Kennan	1989
Tip O'Neill	1991
I.M. Pei	1992
Claude Pepper	1989

Name	Year
Richard Petty	1992
Colin Powell	1991
Ronald W. Reagan ^a	1993
Harry W. Schlaudeman	1992
H. Norman Schwarzkopf	1991
Brent Scowcroft	1991
Margaret Chase Smith	1989
Isaac Stern	1992
Leon Sullivan	1991
Margaret Thatcher	1991
Strom Thurmond	1993
Russell Eroll Train	1991
John William Vessey	1992
Lech Walesa	1989
Vernon Anthony Walters	1991
Sam Walton	1992
William Hedgcock Webster	1991
Elie Wiesel	1992
Ted Williams	1991

Sources: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*; Associated Press, “Bush Honors Webster,” July 25, 1991; Christopher Connell, “Bush Gives Thurmond An Award,” Associated Press, January 12, 1993.

a. Medal known to be awarded “with distinction.”

Table 8. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Ronald W. Reagan (1981-1989)

Name	Year
Walter H. Annenberg	1986
Anne Legendre Armstrong	1987
Pearl Bailey	1988
Howard Henry Baker Jr.	1984
George Balanchine	1983
Malcolm Baldrige	1988
Count Basie	1985
Red Blaik	1986
Eubie Blake	1981
Irving Brown	1988
Paul William Bryant	1983
Warren E. Burger	1988
James Burnham	1983
James Cagney	1984

Name	Year
Peter Alexander Rupert Carrington	1988
Whittaker Chambers	1984
James Edward Cheek	1983
Leo Cherne	1984
Terence James Cooke	1984
Denton Arthur Cooley	1984
Jacques-Yves Cousteau	1985
Justin Whitlock Dart	1987
Tennessee Ernie Ford	1984
Milton Friedman	1988
R. Buckminster Fuller	1983
Hector Perez Garcia	1984
Barry Goldwater	1986
Andrew Jackson Goodpaster	1984
Billy Graham	1983
Ella Grasso	1981
Philip Charles Habib	1982
Bryce N. Harlow	1981
Helen Hayes	1986
Eric Hoffer	1983
Jerome Heartwell Holland	1985
Sidney Hook	1985
Vladimir Horowitz	1986
Henry M. Jackson	1984
Jacob Koppel Javits	1983
Walter Henry Judd	1981
Irving Robert Kaufman	1987
Danny Kaye	1987
Jeane Duane Jordan Kirkpatrick	1985
Lincoln Kirstein	1984
Louis L'Amour	1984
Morris I. Leibman	1981
Lyman Louis Lemnitzer	1987
George Michael Low	1985
Clare Boothe Luce	1983
Joseph Luns	1984
Jean Marie Faircloth MacArthur	1988
Dumas Malone	1983
Mike Mansfield	1989

Name	Year
J. Willard Marriott	1988
John A. McCone	1987
Mabel Mercer	1983
Paul Henry Nitze	1985
David Packard	1988
Frederick Douglass Patterson	1987
Norman Vincent Peale	1984
Nathan Perlmutter	1987
Simon Ramo	1983
Frank Reynolds	1985
Matthew Bunker Ridgway	1986
S. Dillon Ripley	1985
Jackie Robinson	1984
Carlos Pena Romulo	1984
Mstislav Rostropovich	1987
Vermont Connecticut Royster	1986
Albert Bruce Sabin	1986
Anwar Sadat	1984
Eunice Kennedy Shriver	1984
George P. Shultz	1989
Frank Sinatra	1985
Kate Smith	1982
Roger L. Stevens	1988
Jimmy Stewart	1985
Mother Teresa	1985
Charles Bates Thornton	1981
William Bertalan Walsh	1987
Albert Coady Wedemeyer	1985
Caspar Willard Weinberger ^a	1987
Meredith Willson	1987
Albert J. Wohlstetter	1985
Roberta Wohlstetter	1985
Chuck Yeager	1985

Source: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States.*

a. Medal known to be awarded "with distinction."

Table 9. Presidential Medals of Freedom: James E. Carter Jr. (1977-1981)

Name	Year
Ansel Adams	1980

Name	Year
Horace Marden Albright	1980
Roger Nash Baldwin	1981
Harold Brown	1981
Zbigniew Brzezinski	1981
Rachel Louise Carson	1980
Lucia Chase	1980
Warren Christopher	1981
Walter Leland Cronkite Jr.	1981
Kirk Douglas	1981
Arthur Joseph Goldberg	1978
Hubert H. Humphrey	1980
Archbishop Iakovos	1980
Lyndon B. Johnson	1980
Martin Luther King Jr.	1977
Margaret Craig McNamara	1981
Margaret Mead	1979
Karl Menninger	1981
Clarence M. Mitchell Jr.	1980
Edmund S. Muskie	1981
Esther Peterson	1981
Roger Tory Peterson	1980
Hyman George Rickover	1980
Jonas Edward Salk	1977
Beverly Sills	1980
Gerald Coad Smith	1981
Robert Schwarz Strauss	1981
Elbert P. Tuttle	1981
Earl Warren	1981
Robert Penn Warren	1980
John Wayne	1980
Eudora Welty	1980
Tennessee Williams	1980
Andrew Young	1981

Source: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States.*

Table 10. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Gerald R. Ford Jr. (1974-1977)

Name	Year
Iorwith Wilbur Abel ^a	1977
John Bardeen ^a	1977
Irving Berlin ^a	1977
Norman Ernest Borlaug ^a	1977
Omar Nelson Bradley ^a	1977
David Kirkpatrick Este Bruce ^a	1976
Arleigh Albert Burke ^a	1977
Alexander Calder ^a	1977
Bruce Catton ^a	1977
Joe DiMaggio ^a	1977
Ariel Durant ^a	1977
Will Durant ^a	1977
Arthur Fiedler ^a	1977
Henry Jacob Friendly ^a	1977
Martha Graham ^a	1976
Lady Bird Johnson ^a	1977
Henry Alfred Kissinger ^a	1977
Archibald MacLeish ^a	1977
James A. Michener ^a	1977
Georgia O'Keeffe ^a	1977
Jesse Owens ^a	1976
Nelson A. Rockefeller ^a	1977
Norman Rockwell ^a	1977
Arthur Rubinstein ^a	1976
Donald Henry Rumsfeld ^a	1977
Catherine Filene Shouse ^a	1977
Lowell Jackson Thomas ^a	1977
James Watson ^a	1977

Sources: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents.*

a. Medals known to be awarded “with distinction.”

Table 11. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Richard M. Nixon (1969-1974)

Name	Year
Edwin Aldrin ^a	1969
Apollo 13 Mission Operations Team	1970
Neil Alden Armstrong ^a	1969

Name	Year
Earl C. Behrens	1970
Manilo Giovanni Brosio	1971
Michael Collins ^a	1969
Duke Ellington	1969
Edward Thomas Folliard	1970
John Ford	1973
Samuel Goldwyn	1971
Fred W. Haise	1970
William M. Henry	1970
Paul G. Hoffman	1974
William J. Hopkins	1971
Arthur Krock	1970
Melvin Robert Laird Jr.	1974
David Lawrence	1970
George Gould Lincoln	1970
Jim Lovell	1970
Charles LeRoy Lowman	1974
Raymond Charles Moley	1970
Eugene Ormandy	1970
William P. Rogers	1973
Adela Rogers St. Johns	1970
Jack Swigert	1970
John Paul Vann	1972
DeWitt Wallace	1972
Lila Bell Acheson Wallace	1972

Source: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States.*

a. Medals known to be awarded “with distinction.”

Table 12. Presidential Medals of Freedom: Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-1969)

Name	Year
Dean Gooderham Acheson ^a	1964
Marian Anderson	1963
Eugene Robert Black ^a	1969
Detlev W. Bronk	1964
Ralph Johnson Bunche ^a	1963
McGeorge Bundy	1969
Ellsworth Bunker ^a	1963

Name	Year
Ellsworth Bunker ^a	1967
Pablo Casals	1963
Genevieve Caulfield	1963
Clark Clifford ^a	1969
James B. Conant ^a	1963
Aaron Copland	1964
Willem de Kooning	1964
Michael E. DeBakey	1969
Walt Disney	1964
James Frank Dobie	1964
David Dubinsky	1969
Lena Frances Edwards	1964
T.S. Eliot	1964
Ralph Ellison	1969
John Franklin Enders	1963
Lynn Fontanne	1964
Henry Ford II	1969
Felix Frankfurter ^a	1963
John William Gardner	1964
W. Averell Harriman ^a	1969
Theodore M. Hesburgh	1964
Karl Holton	1963
Bob Hope	1969
Pope John XXIII ^a	1963
Clarence Leonard Johnson	1964
Edgar Fosburgh Kaiser	1969
Frederick Russell Kappel	1964
Helen Keller	1964
John F. Kennedy ^a	1963
Robert John Herman Kiphuth	1963
Robert William Komer	1967
Edwin Herbert Land	1963
Mary Woodward Lasker	1969
Herbert Henry Lehman	1963
John Llewellyn Lewis	1964
Walter Lippmann	1964
Eugene M. Locke	1967

Name	Year
Robert Abercrombie Lovett ^a	1963
Alfred Lunt	1964
J. Clifford MacDonald	1963
John Williams Macy	1969
Luis Munoz Marin ^a	1963
John J. McCloy ^a	1963
Ralph McGill	1964
Robert S. McNamara	1968
George Meany	1963
Alexander Meiklejohn	1963
Ludwig Mies van der Rohe	1963
Jean Monnet ^a	1963
Samuel Eliot Morison	1964
Lewis Mumford	1964
Edward R. Murrow ^a	1964
Reinhold Niebuhr	1964
Gregory Peck	1969
Leontyne Price	1964
Clarence Belden Randall	1963
A. Philip Randolph	1964
Laurance S. Rockefeller	1969
Walt Rostow ^a	1969
Dean Rusk ^a	1969
Carl Sandburg	1964
Rudolf Serkin	1963
Merriman Smith	1969
Edward Steichen	1963
John Steinbeck	1964
Helen Taussig	1964
George William Taylor	1963
Cyrus Vance ^a	1969
Carl Vinson ^a	1964
Alan T. Waterman	1963
Thomas J. Watson Jr.	1964
Mark S. Watson	1963
Annie Dodge Wauneka	1963
James Edwin Webb	1968

Name	Year
E.B. White	1963
Paul Dudley White	1964
William Smith White	1969
Thornton Niven Wilder	1963
Roy Wilkins	1969
Edmund Wilson	1963
Andrew Wyeth	1963
Whitney M. Young Jr.	1969

Sources: *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents.*

a. Medals known to be awarded “with distinction.”

Table 13 lists all 672 awards of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, listed in alphabetical order by recipient’s last name. The recipients who are known to have been awarded the medal “with distinction” are marked with a table note ^(a).³²

Table 13. Presidential Medal of Freedom Recipients, 1963-2024

Name	Year	President
Hank Aaron	2002	George W. Bush
Kareem Abdul-Jabbar	2016	Barack H. Obama
Iorwith Wilbur Abel ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Dean Gooderham Acheson ^a	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Ansel Adams	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
John H. Adams	2011	Barack H. Obama
Miriam Adelson	2018	Donald J. Trump
Alvin Ailey	2014	Barack H. Obama
Horace Marden Albright	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
Madeleine Albright	2012	Barack H. Obama
Edwin Aldrin ^a	1969	Richard M. Nixon
Muhammad Ali	2005	George W. Bush
Isabel Allende	2014	Barack H. Obama
Marian Anderson	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
José Andrés	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Maya Angelou	2011	Barack H. Obama
Walter H. Annenberg	1986	Ronald W. Reagan
Apollo 13 Mission Operations Team	1970	Richard M. Nixon

³² As in **Tables 2-12**, information about whether the Presidential Medal of Freedom was awarded “with distinction” comes from Hogan, *Presidential Medal of Freedom*, pp. 155-156; Todd, “Designating Heroes,” pp. 189-203; Wetterau, *Presidential Medal of Freedom*; and contemporaneous presidential remarks. The 55 instances of “with distinction” noted in this report may not be comprehensive.

Name	Year	President
Anne Legendre Armstrong	1987	Ronald W. Reagan
Neil Alden Armstrong ^a	1969	Richard M. Nixon
Arnold Aronson	1998	William J. Clinton
Arthur Ashe	1993	William J. Clinton
Brooke Astor	1998	William J. Clinton
Pearl Bailey	1988	Ronald W. Reagan
James Addison Baker III	1991	George H.W. Bush
Howard Henry Baker Jr.	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
George Balanchine	1983	Ronald W. Reagan
Malcolm Baldrige	1988	Ronald W. Reagan
Roger Nash Baldwin	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
Lucille Ball	1989	George H.W. Bush
Ernie Banks	2013	Barack H. Obama
John Bardeen ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Robert LeRoy Bartley	2003	George W. Bush
Jacques Barzun	2003	George W. Bush
Count Basie	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Gary Becker	2007	George W. Bush
Earl C. Behrens	1970	Richard M. Nixon
Lloyd Bentsen	1999	William J. Clinton
Irving Berlin ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Joseph Bernardin	1996	William J. Clinton
Yogi Berra	2015	Barack H. Obama
Joseph R. Biden Jr. ^a	2017	Barack H. Obama
Simone Biles	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Oscar Elias Biscet	2007	George W. Bush
Eugene Robert Black ^a	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Red Blaik	1986	Ronald W. Reagan
Tony Blair	2009	George W. Bush
Eubie Blake	1981	Ronald W. Reagan
Herbert “Herblock” Block	1994	William J. Clinton
Michael Bloomberg	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Bono	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Norman Ernest Borlaug ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Greg Boyle	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Ben Bradlee	2013	Barack H. Obama
Omar Nelson Bradley ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.

Name	Year	President
James Scott Brady	1996	William J. Clinton
L. Paul Bremer	2004	George W. Bush
William J. Brennan Jr.	1993	William J. Clinton
Nancy Brinker	2009	Barack H. Obama
David Brinkley	1992	George H.W. Bush
Tom Brokaw	2014	Barack H. Obama
Edgar M. Bronfman Sr.	1999	William J. Clinton
Detlev W. Bronk	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Edward W. Brooke	2004	George W. Bush
Manilo Giovanni Brosio	1971	Richard M. Nixon
Harold Brown	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
Irving Brown	1988	Ronald W. Reagan
David Kirkpatrick Este Bruce ^a	1976	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Paul William Bryant	1983	Ronald W. Reagan
Zbigniew Brzezinski	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
William F. Buckley Jr.	1991	George H.W. Bush
Warren Buffett	2011	Barack H. Obama
Ralph Johnson Bunche ^a	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
McGeorge Bundy	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Ellsworth Bunker ^a	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Ellsworth Bunker ^a	1967	Lyndon B. Johnson
Warren E. Burger	1988	Ronald W. Reagan
Arleigh Albert Burke ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
James E. Burke	2000	William J. Clinton
Carol Burnett	2005	George W. Bush
James Burnham	1983	Ronald W. Reagan
George H.W. Bush	2011	Barack H. Obama
James Cagney	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
Alexander Calder ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Simone Campbell	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Peter Alexander Rupert Carrington	1988	Ronald W. Reagan
Bonnie Carroll	2015	Barack H. Obama
Ben Carson	2008	George W. Bush
Johnny Carson	1992	George H.W. Bush
Rachel Louise Carson	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
Ashton B. Carter	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
James E. Carter Jr.	1999	William J. Clinton

Name	Year	President
Rosalynn Carter	1999	William J. Clinton
Pablo Casals	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Bruce Catton ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Genevieve Caulfield	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Vinton G. Cerf	2005	George W. Bush
John Hubbard Chafee	2000	William J. Clinton
Whittaker Chambers	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
James Earl Chaney	2014	Barack H. Obama
Peggy Charren	1995	William J. Clinton
Lucia Chase	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
Cesar Chavez	1994	William J. Clinton
James Edward Cheek	1983	Ronald W. Reagan
Dick Cheney	1991	George H.W. Bush
Leo Cherne	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
Julia Child	2003	George W. Bush
Shirley Chisholm	2015	Barack H. Obama
Warren Christopher	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
Wesley Clark	2000	William J. Clinton
Roberto Clemente	2003	George W. Bush
Van Cliburn	2003	George W. Bush
Clark Clifford ^a	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Hillary Rodham Clinton	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
William J. Clinton	2013	Barack H. Obama
James Clyburn	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Elouise Cobell	2016	Barack H. Obama
William T. Coleman Jr.	1995	William J. Clinton
Robert Coles	1998	William J. Clinton
Francis Collins	2007	George W. Bush
Michael Collins ^a	1969	Richard M. Nixon
Ruth Johnson Colvin	2006	George W. Bush
James B. Conant ^a	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Robert Conquest	2005	George W. Bush
Terence James Cooke	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
Denton Arthur Cooley	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
Joan Ganz Cooney	1995	William J. Clinton
Aaron Copland	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Bill Cosby	2002	George W. Bush

Name	Year	President
Jacques-Yves Cousteau	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Bob Cousy	2019	Donald J. Trump
Ryan C. Crocker	2009	George W. Bush
Walter Leland Cronkite Jr.	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
William James Crowe	2000	William J. Clinton
Justin Dart Jr.	1998	William J. Clinton
Justin Whitlock Dart	1987	Ronald W. Reagan
Doris Day	2004	George W. Bush
Javier Perez de Cuellar	1991	George H.W. Bush
Willem de Kooning	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Robert De Niro	2016	Barack H. Obama
Michael E. DeBakey	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Ellen DeGeneres	2016	Barack H. Obama
C. Douglas Dillon	1989	George H.W. Bush
Joe DiMaggio ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
John David Dingell	2014	Barack H. Obama
Walt Disney	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
John Michael Doar	2012	Barack H. Obama
James Frank Dobie	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Bob Dole	1997	William J. Clinton
Elizabeth Dole	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Placido Domingo	2002	George W. Bush
Phil Donahue	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
James Harold Doolittle	1989	George H.W. Bush
Kirk Douglas	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
Marjory Stoneman Douglas	1993	William J. Clinton
Mildred Spiewak Dresselhaus	2014	Barack H. Obama
Peter F. Drucker	2002	George W. Bush
David Dubinsky	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Evelyn Dubrow	1999	William J. Clinton
Ariel Durant ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Will Durant ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Bob Dylan	2012	Barack H. Obama
Marian Wright Edelman	2000	William J. Clinton
Lena Frances Edwards	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
T.S. Eliot	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Duke Ellington	1969	Richard M. Nixon

Name	Year	President
Ralph Ellison	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
John Franklin Enders	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Emilio Estefan Jr.	2015	Barack H. Obama
Gloria Estefan	2015	Barack H. Obama
Medgar Evers	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
James Farmer	1998	William J. Clinton
Dante Bruno Fascell	1998	William J. Clinton
Anthony S. Fauci	2008	George W. Bush
Luis A. Ferre	1991	George H.W. Bush
Maria Isolina Ferre	1999	William J. Clinton
Arthur Fiedler ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Zachary Fisher	1998	William J. Clinton
Ella Fitzgerald	1992	George H.W. Bush
Arthur Sherwood Flemming	1994	William J. Clinton
William H. Foege	2012	Barack H. Obama
Edward Thomas Folliard	1970	Richard M. Nixon
Lynn Fontanne	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Henry Ford II	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Gerald R. Ford Jr.	1999	William J. Clinton
Betty Ford	1991	George H.W. Bush
John Ford	1973	Richard M. Nixon
Tennessee Ernie Ford	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
Michael J. Fox	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Norman C. Francis	2006	George W. Bush
Billy Frank	2015	Barack H. Obama
Felix Frankfurter ^a	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Aretha Franklin	2005	George W. Bush
John Hope Franklin	1995	William J. Clinton
Tommy R. Franks	2004	George W. Bush
Milton Friedman	1988	Ronald W. Reagan
Henry Jacob Friendly ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
J. William Fulbright	1993	William J. Clinton
Millard Fuller	1996	William J. Clinton
R. Buckminster Fuller	1983	Ronald W. Reagan
Dan Gable	2020	Donald J. Trump
John Kenneth Galbraith	2000	William J. Clinton
Hector Perez Garcia	1984	Ronald W. Reagan

Name	Year	President
Juliet García	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
John William Gardner	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Richard Lawrence Garwin	2016	Barack H. Obama
Bill Gates	2016	Barack H. Obama
Melinda Gates	2016	Barack H. Obama
Robert M. Gates	2011	Barack H. Obama
Frank O. Gehry	2016	Barack H. Obama
Gabrielle Giffords	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Tim Gill	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
John Glenn	2012	Barack H. Obama
Arthur Joseph Goldberg	1978	James E. Carter Jr.
Barry Goldwater	1986	Ronald W. Reagan
Samuel Goldwyn	1971	Richard M. Nixon
Jane Goodall	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Andrew Goodman	2014	Barack H. Obama
Andrew Jackson Goodpaster	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
Albert Gore Jr.	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Billy Graham	1983	Ronald W. Reagan
Katharine Graham	2002	George W. Bush
Martha Graham ^a	1976	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
James P. Grant	1994	William J. Clinton
Ella Grasso	1981	Ronald W. Reagan
Fred Gray Sr.	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Hannah Holborn Gray	1991	George H.W. Bush
Alan Greenspan	2005	George W. Bush
Pedro Jose Greer Jr.	2009	Barack H. Obama
Vartan Gregorian	2004	George W. Bush
Andy Griffith	2005	George W. Bush
Gilbert Melville Grosvenor	2004	George W. Bush
Philip Charles Habib	1982	Ronald W. Reagan
Fred W. Haise	1970	Richard M. Nixon
David A. Hamburg	1996	William J. Clinton
Fannie Lou Hamer	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Lee H. Hamilton	2015	Barack H. Obama
Margaret Hamilton	2016	Barack H. Obama
Tom Hanks	2016	Barack H. Obama
Suzan Shown Harjo	2014	Barack H. Obama

Name	Year	President
Bryce N. Harlow	1981	Ronald W. Reagan
W. Averell Harriman ^a	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Paul Harvey	2005	George W. Bush
Orrin G. Hatch	2018	Donald J. Trump
Vaclav Havel	2003	George W. Bush
Stephen Hawking	2009	Barack H. Obama
Friedrich August von Hayek	1991	George H.W. Bush
Helen Hayes	1986	Ronald W. Reagan
Dorothy Irene Height	1994	William J. Clinton
Donald A. Henderson	2002	George W. Bush
William M. Henry	1970	Richard M. Nixon
Audrey Hepburn	1992	George H.W. Bush
Theodore M. Hesburgh	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Frances Hesselbein	1998	William J. Clinton
Charlton Heston	2003	George W. Bush
Leon A. Higginbotham Jr.	1995	William J. Clinton
George G. Higgins	2000	William J. Clinton
Oliver W. Hill	1999	William J. Clinton
Gordon B. Hinckley	2004	George W. Bush
Gordon Hirabayashi	2012	Barack H. Obama
Eric Hoffer	1983	Ronald W. Reagan
Paul G. Hoffman	1974	Richard M. Nixon
Jerome Heartwell Holland	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Karl Holton	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Lou Holtz	2020	Donald J. Trump
Sidney Hook	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Benjamin L. Hooks	2007	George W. Bush
Bob Hope	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
William J. Hopkins	1971	Richard M. Nixon
Grace Hopper	2016	Barack H. Obama
Vladimir Horowitz	1986	Ronald W. Reagan
John Howard	2009	George W. Bush
Dolores Huerta	2012	Barack H. Obama
Hubert H. Humphrey	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
Henry Hyde	2007	George W. Bush
Archbishop Iakovos	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
Daniel Inouye	2013	Barack H. Obama

Name	Year	President
Henry M. Jackson	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
Jesse Jackson	2000	William J. Clinton
Jacob Koppel Javits	1983	Ronald W. Reagan
Mildred Jeffrey	2000	William J. Clinton
Steve Jobs	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Pope John Paul II	2004	George W. Bush
Pope John XXIII ^a	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Jasper Johns	2011	Barack H. Obama
Frank Johnson Jr.	1995	William J. Clinton
Clarence Leonard Johnson	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
John H. Johnson	1996	William J. Clinton
Katherine Johnson	2015	Barack H. Obama
Lady Bird Johnson ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Lyndon B. Johnson	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
Magic Johnson	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Paul Johnson	2006	George W. Bush
Clarence B. Jones	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Barbara Jordan	1994	William J. Clinton
Jim Jordan	2021	Donald J. Trump
Michael Jordan	2016	Barack H. Obama
Walter Henry Judd	1981	Ronald W. Reagan
Robert E. Kahn	2005	George W. Bush
Daniel Kahneman	2013	Barack H. Obama
Edgar Fosburgh Kaiser	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Max M. Kampelman	1999	William J. Clinton
Frederick Russell Kappel	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Alexander Karloutsos	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Jan Karski	2012	Barack H. Obama
Irving Robert Kaufman	1987	Ronald W. Reagan
Danny Kaye	1987	Ronald W. Reagan
Jack Keane	2020	Donald J. Trump
Helen Keller	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Jack French Kemp	2009	Barack H. Obama
George F. Kennan	1989	George H.W. Bush
Edward M. Kennedy	2009	Barack H. Obama
Ethel Kennedy	2014	Barack H. Obama
John F. Kennedy ^a	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson

Name	Year	President
Robert Francis Kennedy	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
John Kerry	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Khizr Khan	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Martin Luther King Jr.	1977	James E. Carter Jr.
B.B. King	2006	George W. Bush
Billie Jean King	2009	Barack H. Obama
Robert John Herman Kiphuth	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Lane Kirkland	1994	William J. Clinton
Jeane Duane Jordan Kirkpatrick	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Lincoln Kirstein	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
Henry Alfred Kissinger ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Gerda Weissmann Klein	2011	Barack H. Obama
Helmut Kohl	1999	William J. Clinton
Robert William Komer	1967	Lyndon B. Johnson
C. Everett Koop	1995	William J. Clinton
Fred Korematsu	1998	William J. Clinton
Mathilde Krim	2000	William J. Clinton
Irving William Kristol	2002	George W. Bush
Arthur Krock	1970	Richard M. Nixon
Arthur Betz Laffer	2019	Donald J. Trump
Melvin Robert Laird Jr.	1974	Richard M. Nixon
Brian Lamb	2007	George W. Bush
Louis L'Amour	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
Edwin Herbert Land	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Eugene M. Lang	1996	William J. Clinton
Tom Lantos	2008	George W. Bush
Mary Woodward Lasker	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Estee Lauder	2004	George W. Bush
Ralph Lauren	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Frank R. Lautenberg	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
David Lawrence	1970	Richard M. Nixon
Katie Ledecky	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Joshua Lederberg	2006	George W. Bush
Harper Lee	2007	George W. Bush
Opal Lee	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Herbert Henry Lehman	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Morris I. Leibman	1981	Ronald W. Reagan

Name	Year	President
Lyman Louis Lemnitzer	1987	Ronald W. Reagan
John Llewellyn Lewis	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
John Robert Lewis	2011	Barack H. Obama
Rush Limbaugh	2020	Donald J. Trump
Maya Lin	2016	Barack H. Obama
George Gould Lincoln	1970	Richard M. Nixon
Sandra Lindsay	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Sol Myron Linowitz	1998	William J. Clinton
Walter Lippmann	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Tom Little	2011	Barack H. Obama
Eugene M. Locke	1967	Lyndon B. Johnson
Jim Lovell	1970	Richard M. Nixon
Robert Abercrombie Lovett ^a	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
George Michael Low	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Juliette Gordon Low	2012	Barack H. Obama
Joseph E. Lowery	2009	Barack H. Obama
Charles LeRoy Lowman	1974	Richard M. Nixon
Clare Boothe Luce	1983	Ronald W. Reagan
Richard Green Lugar	2013	Barack H. Obama
Joseph Luns	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
Alfred Lunt	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Loretta Lynn	2013	Barack H. Obama
Yo-Yo Ma	2011	Barack H. Obama
Jean Marie Faircloth MacArthur	1988	Ronald W. Reagan
J. Clifford MacDonald	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Archibald MacLeish ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
John Williams Macy	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Dumas Malone	1983	Ronald W. Reagan
Nelson Mandela	2002	George W. Bush
Wilma Mankiller	1998	William J. Clinton
Mike Mansfield	1989	Ronald W. Reagan
Luis Munoz Marin ^a	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
J. Willard Marriott	1988	Ronald W. Reagan
Thurgood Marshall	1993	William J. Clinton
Willie Mays	2015	Barack H. Obama
John McCain	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
John J. McCloy ^a	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson

Name	Year	President
John A. McCone	1987	Ronald W. Reagan
David McCullough	2006	George W. Bush
Ralph McGill	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
George Stanley McGovern	2000	William J. Clinton
Margaret Craig McNamara	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
Robert S. McNamara	1968	Lyndon B. Johnson
Margaret Mead	1979	James E. Carter Jr.
George Meany	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Joseph Medicine Crow	2009	Barack H. Obama
Edwin Meese	2019	Donald J. Trump
Alexander Meiklejohn	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Sylvia Mendez	2011	Barack H. Obama
Karl Menninger	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
Mabel Mercer	1983	Ronald W. Reagan
Angela Merkel	2011	Barack H. Obama
Lionel Messi	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Lorne Michaels	2016	Barack H. Obama
Bob Michel	1994	William J. Clinton
James A. Michener ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Ludwig Mies van der Rohe	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Barbara Mikulski	2015	Barack H. Obama
Abner Joseph Mikva	2014	Barack H. Obama
Harvey Milk	2009	Barack H. Obama
Norman Yoshio Mineta	2006	George W. Bush
Patsy Takemoto Mink	2014	Barack H. Obama
Newton Minow	2016	Barack H. Obama
Clarence M. Mitchell Jr.	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
George John Mitchell	1999	William J. Clinton
Raymond Charles Moley	1970	Richard M. Nixon
Mario Molina	2013	Barack H. Obama
Jean Monnet ^a	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Gillespie V. ("Sonny") Montgomery	2005	George W. Bush
Gordon E. Moore	2002	George W. Bush
Rita Moreno	2004	George W. Bush
Samuel Eliot Morison	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Toni Morrison	2012	Barack H. Obama
Daniel Patrick Moynihan	2000	William J. Clinton

Name	Year	President
Lewis Mumford	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Margaret Murie	1998	William J. Clinton
Edward R. Murrow ^a	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Stan Musial	2011	Barack H. Obama
Edmund S. Muskie	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
Richard B. Myers	2005	George W. Bush
Diane Nash	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Gaylord Nelson	1995	William J. Clinton
Jack Nicklaus	2005	George W. Bush
Reinhold Niebuhr	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Paul Henry Nitze	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Jan Nowak	1996	William J. Clinton
Devin Nunes	2021	Donald J. Trump
Bill Nye	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Sandra Day O'Connor	2009	Barack H. Obama
Mario G. Obledo	1998	William J. Clinton
Ellen Ochoa	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Georgia O'Keeffe ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Buck O'Neil	2006	George W. Bush
Tip O'Neill	1991	George H.W. Bush
Eugene Ormandy	1970	Richard M. Nixon
Jesse Owens ^a	1976	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Peter Pace	2008	George W. Bush
David Packard	1988	Ronald W. Reagan
Eduardo Padrón	2016	Barack H. Obama
Alan Cedric Page	2018	Donald J. Trump
Arnold Palmer	2004	George W. Bush
Antonia Pantoja	1996	William J. Clinton
Rosa Parks	1996	William J. Clinton
Frederick Douglass Patterson	1987	Ronald W. Reagan
Arnall Patz	2004	George W. Bush
Norman Vincent Peale	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
Gregory Peck	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
I.M. Pei	1992	George H.W. Bush
Nancy Pelosi	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Roger Penske	2019	Donald J. Trump
Claude Pepper	1989	George H.W. Bush

Name	Year	President
Shimon Peres	2012	Barack H. Obama
Itzhak Perlman	2015	Barack H. Obama
Nathan Perlmutter	1987	Ronald W. Reagan
William James Perry	1997	William J. Clinton
Esther Peterson	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
Roger Tory Peterson	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
Richard Petty	1992	George H.W. Bush
Gary Jim Player	2021	Donald J. Trump
Norman Podhoretz	2004	George W. Bush
Sidney Poitier	2009	Barack H. Obama
Colin Powell	1991	George H.W. Bush
Colin Powell ^a	1993	William J. Clinton
Elvis Presley	2018	Donald J. Trump
Leontyne Price	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Simon Ramo	1983	Ronald W. Reagan
Clarence Belden Randall	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
A. Philip Randolph	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Megan Rapinoe	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Joseph L. Rauh Jr.	1993	William J. Clinton
Martha Raye	1993	William J. Clinton
Nancy Reagan	2002	George W. Bush
Ronald W. Reagan ^a	1993	George H.W. Bush
Robert Redford	2016	Barack H. Obama
Walter Philip Reuther	1995	William J. Clinton
Frank Reynolds	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Cruz Reynoso	2000	William J. Clinton
Cecile Richards	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Elliot Richardson	1998	William J. Clinton
Hyman George Rickover	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
Sally K. Ride	2013	Barack H. Obama
Matthew Bunker Ridgway	1986	Ronald W. Reagan
Jane Rigby	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
S. Dillon Ripley	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Chita Rivera	2009	Barack H. Obama
Mariano Rivera	2019	Donald J. Trump
George Islay MacNeill Robertson	2003	George W. Bush
Frank Robinson	2005	George W. Bush

Name	Year	President
Jackie Robinson	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
Mary Robinson	2009	Barack H. Obama
David Rockefeller	1998	William J. Clinton
Laurance S. Rockefeller	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Nelson A. Rockefeller ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Norman Rockwell ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Fred Rogers	2002	George W. Bush
William P. Rogers	1973	Richard M. Nixon
Teresa Romero	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
George W. Romney	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Carlos Pena Romulo	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
A.M. Rosenthal	2002	George W. Bush
Diana Ross	2016	Barack H. Obama
Walt Rostow ^a	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Mstislav Rostropovich	1987	Ronald W. Reagan
James W. Rouse	1995	William J. Clinton
Janet D. Rowley	2009	Barack H. Obama
Edward Roybal	2014	Barack H. Obama
Vermont Connecticut Royster	1986	Ronald W. Reagan
David M. Rubenstein	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Arthur Rubinstein ^a	1976	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
William Doyle Ruckelshaus	2015	Barack H. Obama
Donald Henry Rumsfeld ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Paul Rusesabagina	2005	George W. Bush
Dean Rusk ^a	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Bill Russell	2011	Barack H. Obama
Bayard Rustin	2013	Barack H. Obama
Babe Ruth	2018	Donald J. Trump
Jim Ryun	2020	Donald J. Trump
Albert Bruce Sabin	1986	Ronald W. Reagan
Anwar Sadat	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
William L. Safire	2006	George W. Bush
Ginetta Sagan	1996	William J. Clinton
Jonas Edward Salk	1977	James E. Carter Jr.
Carl Sandburg	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Arturo Sandoval	2013	Barack H. Obama
Antonin Scalia	2018	Donald J. Trump

Name	Year	President
Harry W. Schlaudeman	1992	George H.W. Bush
H. Norman Schwarzkopf	1991	George H.W. Bush
Michael Henry Schwerner	2014	Barack H. Obama
Brent Scowcroft	1991	George H.W. Bush
Vin Scully	2016	Barack H. Obama
Rudolf Serkin	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Donna Shalala	2008	George W. Bush
John Shalikashvili	1997	William J. Clinton
Albert Shanker	1998	William J. Clinton
Natan Sharansky	2006	George W. Bush
Judy Shepard	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Catherine Filene Shouse ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Eunice Kennedy Shriver	1984	Ronald W. Reagan
Sargent Shriver	1994	William J. Clinton
George P. Shultz	1989	Ronald W. Reagan
Charlie Sifford	2014	Barack H. Obama
Laurence H. Silberman	2008	George W. Bush
Beverly Sills	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
Alan Simpson	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Frank Sinatra	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Ellen Johnson Sirleaf	2007	George W. Bush
Dean Smith	2013	Barack H. Obama
Gerald Coad Smith	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
Jean Kennedy Smith	2011	Barack H. Obama
Kate Smith	1982	Ronald W. Reagan
Margaret Chase Smith	1989	George H.W. Bush
Merriman Smith	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Robert M. Solow	2014	Barack H. Obama
Stephen Sondheim	2015	Barack H. Obama
Annika Sorenstam	2021	Donald J. Trump
George Soros	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Steven Spielberg	2015	Barack H. Obama
Bruce Springsteen	2016	Barack H. Obama
Adela Rogers St. Johns	1970	Richard M. Nixon
Roger Thomas Staubach	2018	Donald J. Trump
Edward Steichen	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
John Steinbeck	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson

Name	Year	President
Gloria Steinem	2013	Barack H. Obama
Isaac Stern	1992	George H.W. Bush
George Stevens Jr.	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
John Paul Stevens	2012	Barack H. Obama
Roger L. Stevens	1988	Ronald W. Reagan
Jimmy Stewart	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Jens Stoltenberg	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Robert Schwarz Strauss	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
Meryl Streep	2014	Barack H. Obama
Barbra Streisand	2015	Barack H. Obama
Leon Sullivan	1991	George H.W. Bush
Pat Summitt	2012	Barack H. Obama
Aung San Suu Kyi	2000	William J. Clinton
John J. Sweeney	2011	Barack H. Obama
Jack Swigert	1970	Richard M. Nixon
Helen Taussig	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
Gardner C. Taylor	2000	William J. Clinton
George William Taylor	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
James Taylor	2015	Barack H. Obama
Edward Teller	2003	George W. Bush
George Tenet	2004	George W. Bush
Mother Teresa	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Margaret Thatcher	1991	George H.W. Bush
Dave Thomas	2003	George W. Bush
Lowell Jackson Thomas ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Marlo Thomas	2014	Barack H. Obama
Charles Bates Thornton	1981	Ronald W. Reagan
Jim Thorpe	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Strom Thurmond	1993	George H.W. Bush
Russell Eroll Train	1991	George H.W. Bush
Richard Trumka	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Elbert P. Tuttle	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
Desmond Tutu	2009	Barack H. Obama
Cicely Tyson	2016	Barack H. Obama
Mo Udall	1996	William J. Clinton
Alvaro Uribe	2009	George W. Bush
Cyrus Vance ^a	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson

Name	Year	President
John Paul Vann	1972	Richard M. Nixon
Wilma L. Vaught	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
William C. Velasquez	1995	William J. Clinton
John William Vessey	1992	George H.W. Bush
Carl Vinson ^a	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
C.T. Vivian	2013	Barack H. Obama
Patricia M. Wald	2013	Barack H. Obama
Lech Walesa	1989	George H.W. Bush
DeWitt Wallace	1972	Richard M. Nixon
Lila Bell Acheson Wallace	1972	Richard M. Nixon
William Bertalan Walsh	1987	Ronald W. Reagan
Vernon Anthony Walters	1991	George H.W. Bush
Sam Walton	1992	George H.W. Bush
Earl Warren	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
Robert Penn Warren	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
Denzel Washington	2022 ^b	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Lew R. Wasserman	1995	William J. Clinton
Alan T. Waterman	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Thomas J. Watson Jr.	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
James Watson ^a	1977	Gerald R. Ford Jr.
Mark S. Watson	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Annie Dodge Wauneka	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Edgar Wayburn	1999	William J. Clinton
John Wayne	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
James Edwin Webb	1968	Lyndon B. Johnson
William Hedgcock Webster	1991	George H.W. Bush
Albert Coady Wedemeyer	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Caspar Willard Weinberger ^a	1987	Ronald W. Reagan
Eudora Welty	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
Jerry West	2019	Donald J. Trump
Byron R. White	2003	George W. Bush
E.B. White	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Paul Dudley White	1964	Lyndon B. Johnson
William Smith White	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Elie Wiesel	1992	George H.W. Bush
Simon Wiesenthal	2000	William J. Clinton
Thornton Niven Wilder	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson

Name	Year	President
Roy Wilkins	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Ted Williams	1991	George H.W. Bush
Tennessee Williams	1980	James E. Carter Jr.
Meredith Willson	1987	Ronald W. Reagan
Edmund Wilson	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
James Q. Wilson	2003	George W. Bush
Oprah Winfrey	2013	Barack H. Obama
Anna Wintour	2025	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
John Minor Wisdom	1993	William J. Clinton
Albert J. Wohlstetter	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Roberta Wohlstetter	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Stevie Wonder	2014	Barack H. Obama
John Wooden	2003	George W. Bush
Tiger Woods	2019	Donald J. Trump
Walter Wriston	2004	George W. Bush
Andrew Wyeth	1963	Lyndon B. Johnson
Minoru Yasui	2015	Barack H. Obama
Chuck Yeager	1985	Ronald W. Reagan
Michelle Yeoh	2024	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Whitney M. Young Jr.	1969	Lyndon B. Johnson
Andrew Young	1981	James E. Carter Jr.
Muhammad Yunus	2009	Barack H. Obama
Raul Yzaguirre	2022	Joseph R. Biden Jr.
Mildred Didrikson Zaharias	2021	Donald J. Trump
Elmo R. Zumwalt	1998	William J. Clinton

Sources: *Daily Compilation of Presidential Documents*; *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States*; *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*; Associated Press, “Bush Honors Webster,” July 25, 1991; Christopher Connell, “Bush Gives Thurmond An Award,” Associated Press, January 12, 1993; White House, “President Biden Announces Recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom,” press release, January 4, 2025, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2025/01/04/president-biden-announces-recipients-of-the-presidential-medal-of-freedom-3>.

- a. Medals known to be awarded “with distinction.”
- b. Announced in July 2022, presented in January 2025.

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