

America Salutes Its Heroes

(NAPSA)—The year 1944 was pivotal in the Allied prosecution of World War II. Some of the most crucial battles were engaged in the European and Pacific theaters as the Allied nations began to push back in earnest against the Axis powers.

World War II was a defining moment in time for the United States: It touched the lives of every citizen, every community and every family, and propelled a once isolationist country into a position of global leadership. There was no aspect of American life that was not affected by the war. More than 16.2 million men and women served during WW II. The war engulfed the entire globe: Nearly every continent saw significant action and men and women from every inhabited continent died in it.

Nearly 50 percent of those who wore the uniform of the United States served in the Army. World War II veterans from all services—the Army, Navy and Marine Corps—are dying at a rate of 1,135 per day.

“As our nation remembers the courage and sacrifice of those who fought on battlefields from Normandy to Bastogne, from Italy to North Africa and throughout the numerous Pacific Islands, we are presented with a unique opportunity to celebrate this legacy of duty, honor and selfless sacrifice, which now serves as the foundation for today’s soldiers,” said Colonel David M. Griffith, director, U.S. Army Freedom Team Salute program. “America has a responsibility to acknowledge the sacrifice of WW II veterans, to ensure they are not forgotten.”

Freedom Team Salute is an official Army commendation program that recognizes the essential bond among soldiers, family and community; it celebrates the sacrifices made by all those who support our soldiers; and honors the millions of soldier veterans who have served and remain as our



Col. David Griffith, director, Freedom Team Salute program (right), presents Col. John Marr, USA Ret. (left), with a Freedom Team Salute commendation at the National World War II Memorial in recognition of his service as part of D-Day.

living connection to generations of duty, honor and patriotism. Army veterans receive a letter and certificate of appreciation signed by the Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief of Staff.

“It is appropriate that we as a society take the opportunity to pay our respects for the enormous sacrifices that were required of those who served in uniform during World War II as well as supporters on the home front who made their service possible,” said Griffith. “Observances are occurring all year in the U.S., in Europe and in other places; but the service and sacrifice of our Army veterans is observed pre-eminently in the hearts of men and women around the world who remember the cost of freedom and are grateful.”

Any honorably discharged Army veteran who served during World War II is eligible for Freedom Team Salute, including men and women who served in the Army Air Force, Army Air Corps, Women’s Army Corps and the Army Nurse Corps.

For more information about Freedom Team Salute or to honor a U.S. Army veteran, visit www.freedomteamsalute.com.