

Did You Know... November 11th, 2009 Marks the 55th Anniversary of Veterans Day?

Democratic Caucus
U.S. House of Representatives



John B. Larson, Chairman
Xavier Becerra, Vice Chairman

During World War I, the Allied nations and Germany signed an armistice and ceased combat on November 11th, 1918. Democratic President Woodrow Wilson commemorated the day as Armistice Day and, in 1954, Congress expanded the meaning of the holiday by declaring November 11th as Veteran's Day—to honor veterans of all American wars. As we come together to thank our men and women in uniform, we hope you will find this information helpful.

VETERANS BILLS FROM THE 111TH CONGRESS SIGNED INTO LAW INCLUDE:

- **The Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-81)** that ensures timely funding to support the delivery of high quality medical care for our veterans by authorizing Congress to approve investments in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical care, and requiring the President to request those funds, one year in advance.
- **The Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-32)** that expands the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill by covering full college tuition for children of service members killed on active duty since September 11, 2001.
- **The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (P.L. 111-5)** that provides an economic stimulus payment of \$250 to 2 million disabled veterans and a \$1.4 billion increase for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to maintain, construct and repair VA medical facilities.

RECOGNIZING THE DIVERSITY OF OUR VETERANS & SERVICE MEMBERS

American service members come from all walks of life. The following stories and statistics are symbolic of the diversity that helps make America, and its armed forces, strong.



**LANCE CORPORAL
JOSÉ ANTONIO
GUTIERREZ**
War: Iraq
Branch: Marine Corps

In 2003, at the age of 22, Gutierrez became one of the first soldiers to be killed in Iraq. Born in Guatemala, he made a 2,000 mile journey as an orphan to come to America and died before receiving his U.S. citizenship.¹ More than 45,000 non-citizens were serving in the United States Armed Forces as of March 2007.² Gutierrez's citizenship certificate, backdated to his death on March 21, 2003, was presented to his adoptive mother at his memorial service.³



**CAPTAIN CAROLYN
HISAKO TANAKA**
War: Vietnam War
Branch: Army Nurse Corps

Hisako was six years old when her family was evicted from their California home, in the wake of Pearl Harbor, and relocated to an internment camp in Arizona. After the war, her family returned to find their California home burned to the ground. Despite this painful memory, she applied her experience as an emergency room nurse to the Army, enlisting in 1966 and telling skeptics, "I have a skill that is needed in Vietnam, and I'm going there to do my duty for my country."⁴



**FIRST LIEUTENANT
ROBERT P. MADISON**
War: World War II
Branch: Army

Madison fought in World War II as part of the 92nd Division all-black cavalry unit known as the "Buffalo Soldiers" and featured in the novel and film, *Miracle at St. Anna*. He earned a Purple Heart for wounds received in action in Italy. President Harry Truman signed an order desegregating the U.S. Armed Forces two years after the war.⁵ Madison went on to earn a graduate degree from Harvard University, was a Fulbright Scholar, and founded Ohio's first African American owned architecture firm.

CURRENTLY DEPLOYED SERVICE MEMBERS⁶

Total Deployed Service Members	Females	African-Americans	Latinos	Asian/Pacific Islanders	American Indian/Alaskans	Service Members of Mixed Race
269,709	28,054	42,505	28,416	9,752	3,680	1,924

¹ Los Angeles Times, *His New Life in the U.S. Ends in Iraq*. March 24, 2003.

² Congressional Research Service, "Expedited Citizenship Through Military Service: Current Law, Policy, and Issues." February, 2009.

³ Associated Press, *Families conflicted about posthumous citizenship for US troops killed in Iraq*. March 20, 2008.

⁴ Library of Congress, *Experiencing War: Stories from the Veterans History Project. Asian Pacific Americans: Going for Broke*. Accessed May 20, 2009.

⁵ Library of Congress, *Experiencing War: Stories from the Veterans History Project. Buffalo Soldiers: the 92nd in Italy*. Accessed May 19, 2009.

⁶ Department of Defense, *Contingency Tracking System, Currently deployed service members as of August 31, 2009*.