



# MEDAL OF HONOR MEDIA KIT



**January 2025**  
**Korean War honorees**



**U.S. ARMY**

I WILL ALWAYS PLACE THE MISSION FIRST \* I WILL NEVER ACCEPT DEFEAT \* I WILL NEVER QUIT \* I WILL NEVER LEAVE A FALLEN COMRADE



# MEDAL OF HONOR

## Private First Class Wataru Nakamura



### Hero Biography and Battle Narrative



**Hometown:** Los Angeles, California

**Unit:** Company I, 38th Infantry Regiment,  
2nd Infantry Division

**Enlisted:** April 22, 1944



Pfc. Wataru Nakamura distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty, while serving with Company I, 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, in the vicinity of P'ungch'on-ni, Korea on May 18, 1951. Around daybreak, Nakamura volunteered to check and repair a communications line between his platoon and the command post. As he made his way along the line, he was brought under fire from an enemy force that had surrounded friendly positions and were threatening to break the company defense lines.

Immediately, without regard for his own safety and without waiting for help, Nakamura rushed the enemy with a fixed bayonet and singlehandedly destroyed a hostile machine-gun nest and drove the enemy from several bunkers they had captured. When his ammunition was depleted, he withdrew under intense enemy fire. He then met an ammunition party ascending the hill. After quickly briefing the officer in charge, Nakamura rearmed himself and returned to the fight.

In a fierce charge, he killed three of the enemy in one bunker, then killed and seriously wounded another in the last enemy-held bunker. Continuing to press the attack, he was mortally wounded by an enemy grenade.

Nakamura's extraordinary heroism and selflessness above and beyond the call of duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.



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### 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division

The 38th Infantry Regiment was constituted in May 1917 as a unit of the regular Army. In October 1917 it was assigned to the 3rd Division. Deploying with the 3rd Division to France, the regiment earned the nickname “Rock of the Marne” in July 1918 after it defeated a much larger German force attacking across the Marne River. The regiment participated in all subsequent major battles of the war. After occupation duty in Germany, the 38th returned to the United States in 1919. In 1939, the regiment was transferred to the 2nd Infantry Division, with whom it served in World War II and the Korean War.



The 2nd Infantry Division was constituted in 1917 as a unit of the regular Army and organized in France from units assigned to the American Expeditionary Forces, including a U.S. Marine Corps brigade. The 2nd Infantry Division fought in all of the major battles of 1918, such as Belleau Wood, Soissons, St. Mihiel and the Meuse-Argonne. After occupation duty in Germany, the 2nd Infantry Division moved to the United States in 1919, replacing the U.S. Marine Corps brigade with an Army brigade. Between the world wars, it tested the Triangular Infantry Division concept that the Army would use in World War II and the Korean War.

In 1943, it deployed to the United Kingdom, and then to France in June 1944. The 2nd Infantry Division fought from Normandy to Germany and played a vital role in the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944. Resuming the offensive, the division crossed the Rhine River in March 1945 and was in Czechoslovakia when Germany surrendered. The 2nd Infantry Division returned to the United States in July 1945 to prepare for the invasion of Japan, but the war ended before it could deploy. Instead, the division moved to Fort Lewis, Washington.

In July 1950, the 2nd Infantry Division became the first division sent from the United States to reinforce the Eighth Army in Korea. It helped hold the Pusan Perimeter and then advanced with United Nations forces into North Korea. In November, the Chinese launched a massive offensive that forced Eighth Army to withdraw from North Korea. The 2nd Infantry Division covered the right flank and suffered severe casualties as it fought its way past enemy roadblocks in what became known as The Gauntlet.



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After reconstitution in South Korea, the division saw heavy combat in the drive north to the 38th Parallel from January to June 1951. During that period the division's 23rd Regimental Combat Team inflicted a major defeat on the Chinese at Chipyeong-ni. In the war's final two years, the 2nd Infantry Division fought for ridges and outposts, including a series of battles at Bloody Ridge, Heartbreak Ridge and Old Baldy. After the armistice, the division remained in Korea until 1954; then its colors were transferred to Fort Lewis and used to reflag the 44th Infantry Division as the 2nd Infantry Division.



In 1956, the division moved to Alaska as part of an Operation Gyroscope rotation, in which it switched places with the 71st Infantry Division. In June 1958, the division's colors were transferred to Fort Benning, Georgia, and used to reflag the 10th Infantry Division as the 2nd Infantry Division. In July 1965, the 2nd Infantry Division and the 1st Cavalry Division in Korea exchanged their colors and unit designations as the Army created the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) at Fort Benning, using units from the 11th Air Assault Division and the 2nd Infantry Division.

Since 1965, the 2nd Infantry Division has remained on the peninsula defending South Korea, which included clashes with North Korean infiltrators in the 1960s. In 2004, one of its brigade combat teams deployed from Korea to Iraq.



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