

The U.S. Air Force Academy Thomas D. White Award

The Thomas D. White National Defense Award was fashioned after West Point's Thayer Medal, presented for outstanding contribution to duty, honor or country. Established 1 March 1962, USAFA Superintendent, Maj Gen W. S. Stone, proposed the award be named the Thomas D. White National Defense Award in honor of former Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen Thomas D. White. The award is conferred annually on the United States citizen who is judged by the USAFA to have contributed most significantly to the national defense and security of the United States.

AWARD CRITERIA

- A US citizen who has contributed significantly to national defense and security
- Any specific field of endeavor; to include: science, technology, management, leadership, national and/or international affairs
- Federal employees, including military, are eligible upon termination from government service

SELECTION PROCESS

- Academy requests nominations from the Board of Visitors members and USAFA agencies
- Nomination packages are screened for appropriateness and validity
- Selection committee (consisting of USAF Academy senior leadership) review packages to determine the award recipient

AWARD PRESENTATION

The HQ USAFA/CC normally presents the award. Presentation date is based on the schedule and availability of the recipient. Several presentation venues are possible:

- Announce and/or present the award during a home football game. This ceremony must be kept very brief due to game timing requirements.
- Present award at a fall Cadet Wing parade. May be followed by a reception or dinner.
- Present the award on the Mitchell Hall Staff Tower at start of noon meal.
- Present the award in Arnold Hall auditorium with two Cadet Groups attending.



Mitchell Hall Staff Tower and Arnold Hall are also the inclement weather options. The award consists of a trophy, certificate, and citation. The recipient's name is permanently displayed on the Thomas D. White Award plaque in the Arnold Hall ballroom.

PREVIOUS AWARD WINNERS

- 1962 - Dr. Edward Teller, nuclear physicist and principal architect of the hydrogen bomb
- 1963 - Dr. Theodore von Karman, pioneer in the development of jet propulsion and rocket engines
- 1964 - The Honorable Carl Vinson, former Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee
- 1965 - General Curtis E. LeMay, USAF, Retired, World War II commander in Europe and the Pacific, planner of the Berlin Airlift, and Air Force Chief of Staff
- 1966 - Mr. Clarence L. Johnson, former vice president of advanced development projects for Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, and designer of the F-104 and U-2 aircraft

- 1967 - Lieutenant General James E. Doolittle, USAF, Retired, former Chairman of the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board and World War II aviation hero
- 1968 - General Carl Spaatz, USAF, Retired, first Air Force Chief of Staff
- 1969 - Lieutenant General Ira C. Eaker, USAF, Retired, former Chief of the Air Staff and aviation pioneer
- 1970 - Dr. Charles Stark Draper, former vice director of the instrumentation laboratory, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- 1971 - Mr. Igor I. Sikorsky, pioneer aircraft designer, advisor and consultant to the United Aircraft Manufacturing Corp
- 1972 - General Nathan F. Twining, USAF, Retired, former Air Force Chief of Staff and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
- 1973 - General Bernard A. Schriever, USAF, Retired, former Commander, Air Force Systems Command
- 1974 - General Lauris Norstad, USAF, Retired, former Supreme Allied Commander, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
- 1975 - Senator John C. Stennis, former Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee
- 1976 - General John D. Ryan, USAF, Retired, former Air Force Chief of Staff
- 1977 - Mr. Bob Hope, international entertainer and humanitarian
- 1978 - Senator Barry M. Goldwater, member of the Senate Armed Services Committee
- 1979 - General George S. Brown, USAF, Retired, former Air Force Chief of Staff and Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
- 1980 - The Honorable Dr. Robert C. Seamans, Jr., former Secretary of the Air Force
- 1981 - The Honorable David Packard, former Deputy Secretary of Defense and a founder of the Hewlett Packard Electronics Corporation
- 1982 - The Honorable Melvin Laird, former Secretary of Defense
- 1983 - General Russell Dougherty, USAF, Retired, former Commander-in-Chief, Strategic Air Command
- 1984 - Senator John G. Tower, former Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee
- 1985 - General Theodore R. Milton, USAF, Retired, former U.S. Representative to the NATO Military Committee
- 1986 - Senator Stuart Symington, first Secretary of the Air Force
- 1987 - Senator Sam Nunn, Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee
- 1988 - The Honorable Caspar W. Weinberger, former Secretary of Defense
- 1989 - President Ronald Reagan, 40th President of the United States
- 1990 - Admiral William J. Crowe, USN, Retired, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
- 1991 - General Larry D. Welch, USAF, Retired, former Air Force Chief of Staff
- 1992 - Dr. Malcolm R. Currie, former chief executive officer, Hughes Aircraft Company
- 1993 - Lieutenant General Brent C. Scowcroft, USA, Retired, former National Security Advisor.
- 1994 - President George H.W. Bush, 41st President of the United States
- 1995 - Lieutenant General Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., USAF, Retired, Tuskegee Airmen leader, member and Chairman of the Academy Board of Visitors
- 1996 - General Charles A. Gabriel, USAF, Retired, former Air Force Chief of Staff
- 1997 - Senator John McCain, member, Senate Armed Services Committee
- 1998 - General Colin L. Powell, USA, Retired, former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
- 1999 - Senator Strom Thurmond, Chairman Emeritus and former Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee
- 2000 - Congressman Floyd D. Spence, Chairman, House Armed Services Committee
- 2001 - Congressman C.W. Bill Young, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee
- 2002 - The Honorable Norman R. Augustine, retired Chairman and CEO, Lockheed Martin Corporation
- 2003 - The Honorable Duncan Hunter, Chairman, House Armed Services Committee
- 2004 - Colonel John Boyd, USAF, Retired (deceased Mar 97), modern military strategist who wrote the first official "doctrine" on fighter pilot strategy, creator of the Energy-Maneuverability, or E-M, theory of aerial combat, as well as the chief architect behind the F-15 and (especially)

F-16 fighter planes, developed "OODA Loop" (observe-orient-decide-act) theory of decision making

2005 – General Richard B. Myers, USAF, Retired, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

2006 – General Ronald R. Fogleman, USAF, Retired, former Air Force Chief of Staff

Current as of January 2007