



THE WORLD FOOD PRIZE®

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Ambassador Kenneth Quinn to receive Army Air Medal

World Food Prize president may be only civilian to receive this military decoration for service in combat

(DES MOINES, IA, USA) – Ambassador Kenneth M. Quinn, president of the World Food Prize Foundation, will be honored for his receipt of the Army Air Medal for combat service at a ceremony hosted by **Congressman Leonard Boswell** and **John Ruan III** at the Des Moines Club on Friday, January 16.

Boswell, himself a recipient of the Air Medal for his services as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam, was instrumental in getting the Air Medal approved for Quinn. Boswell first announced the Air Medal during the 2008 World Food Prize events. “Ambassador Quinn exposed himself to hostile fire many, many times and went out and saved lives and took care of things that needed to be done under extreme situations,” Boswell said at the time. “What a great patriot.”

Lee Stanley, Commanding Officer of the Air Medal Society, stated that the society is unaware of any other occasion in which a civilian has received this honor.

“It is very, very rare that a civilian would receive the Air Medal, and this may in fact be the only time it has happened,” Stanley said. “Ambassador Quinn has truly distinguished himself with this extreme honor.”

“I am extremely grateful for Congressman Boswell’s efforts on my behalf,” Quinn said. “Receiving the Air Medal is a terrific honor, and one that I never expected to receive as a civilian Foreign Service Officer. Modern warfare, however, produces unusual situations where civilians can be directly involved in military conflict.”

Quinn was formally presented the award Tuesday by **U.S. Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte** in Washington, D.C. “for distinguishing himself by meritorious achievement during sustained aerial operational activities against hostile forces in the Republic of Vietnam during the period of May 1970 to December 1970.” During this time, Quinn participated in over 25 aerial missions over hostile enemy territory as a civilian Foreign Service Officer.

Quinn’s diplomatic career spanned almost 32 years, culminating in his appointment as U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia from 1996-1999. He assumed leadership of the World Food Prize Foundation on January 1, 2000 and has since greatly expanded the scope and prestige of what has been referred to as “the Nobel Prize for Food and Agriculture.” Quinn’s complete bio can be found at <http://www.worldfoodprize.org/about/quinn.htm>.

The Air Medal was authorized by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1942. It is awarded to “any person who, while serving in any capacity in or with the U.S. Army, will have distinguished himself or herself by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight.”

WHAT: Presentation of the Air Medal

WHO: Ambassador Kenneth Quinn, Congressman Leonard Boswell, John Ruan III, others

WHERE: Des Moines Club (666 Grand Ave.; 34th Floor)

WHEN: Friday, January 16 at 4:00 p.m.

The World Food Prize was conceived by Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, recipient of the 1970 Nobel Peace Prize. Since 1986, The World Food Prize has honored outstanding individuals who have made vital contributions to improving the quality, quantity or availability of food throughout the world. Previous Laureates have been recognized from Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Denmark, India, Mexico, Sierra Leone, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United Nations and the United States. In 1990, Des Moines businessman and philanthropist John Ruan assumed responsibility of The Prize and established The World Food Prize Foundation, located in Des Moines, Iowa.