

**United States Army Aviation
Center of Excellence
& Fort Rucker**

POW/MIA Recognition Ceremony



**18 September 2026
0830
Veterans Park
Fort Rucker, Alabama**



***Major General Phillip C. Baker
Commanding General
United States Army Aviation
Center of Excellence***

Major General Cain Baker is from Fayetteville, Georgia, and a graduate of Auburn University. He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Aviation Branch in 1996.

MG Baker's assignments have included Platoon Leader positions in both 2nd Infantry Division and the 101st Airborne Division. While assigned to the 101st Airborne, MG Baker served as the Division G3 Air in support of Task Force Falcon IIIA, Kosovo. MG Baker was assigned to 1-227th Aviation Regiment "First Attack", Fort Hood, Texas, as the Assistant Operations Officer during the initial invasion of Iraq and assumed multiple Commands, deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Following command, MG Baker served as an Observer Controller at the National Training Center Fort Irwin, California.

MG Baker served in 3-101st Aviation Regiment as the Battalion Executive Officer and then the 159th Combat Aviation Brigade Operations Officer (S3), 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), while deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. As the Battalion Commander of 1-227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, he deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operations Enduring Freedom.

MG Baker served as the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade Commander, 1st Cavalry Division while also deploying to Europe. MG Baker served as the Principal Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense from 2018 to 2021. MG Baker served as the Deputy Commanding General for Support, 25th Infantry Division from 2021 to 2023. MG Baker recently served as the Future Vertical Lift Cross Functional Team overseeing requirements for Future Long-Range Assault Aircraft (FLRAA), Launched Effects, Future Tactical Uncrewed Aircraft System (FTUAS), and the Modular Open Systems Approach (MOSA). As the Future Capability Director, MG Baker is responsible for all Army Aviation concepts, requirements, and experimentation efforts.

MG Baker is married to the former Courtney Sherman of Ocala, Florida. They have three daughters: Hannah, Caitlin, and Ashley.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

WELCOME

RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUESTS

ARRIVAL OF NATIONAL COLORS

INVOCATION

***CH (LTC) MICHAEL J. JOHNSON
GARRISON CHAPLAIN, ARMY AVIATION CENTER OF
EXCELLENCE***

HONORS TO THE NATION

REMARKS

***MG PHILLIP C. BAKER
COMMANDING GENERAL, ARMY AVIATION CENTER OF
EXCELLENCE***

ARMED FORCES MEDLEY

DEPARTURE OF NATIONAL COLORS

CONCLUSION



National POW/MIA Recognition Day

Observed annually on the third Friday in September, National POW/MIA Recognition Day is a solemn occasion honoring the courage, sacrifice, and enduring resilience of U.S. service members who were taken prisoner of war or remain missing in action. While the observance originated during the Vietnam War era, its significance extends to all conflicts involving American service members.

The POW/MIA flag was first envisioned in 1970 by Mrs. Michael Hoff, whose husband was listed as missing in action in Vietnam. She approached Norman Rivkees, who designed the initial flag. In 1972, the National League of POW/MIA Families formally approved the design, and in 1982 the flag was flown over the White House for the first time—becoming the only flag, other than the United States flag, to receive that honor.

National POW/MIA Recognition Day was established in 1979 through a presidential proclamation by President Jimmy Carter. Since then, every president has continued the tradition of issuing an annual proclamation commemorating this day. Congress later designated April 9 as an additional day of recognition in 1982, aligning it with the return of the first American POWs from North Vietnam in 1973.

The 1998 Defense Authorization Act further elevated the observance, officially designating the third Friday in September as National POW/MIA Recognition Day and requiring the POW/MIA flag to be displayed at specific federal sites on six national observances: Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, National POW/MIA Recognition Day, and Veterans Day.

In 2019, the National POW/MIA Flag Act expanded this requirement, mandating that the POW/MIA flag be flown whenever the U.S. flag is displayed at prominent federal properties, including the White House, the U.S. Capitol, national memorials, national cemeteries, major military installations, Department of Veterans Affairs medical centers, and U.S. Postal Service facilities.

Today, we gather to honor the memory, service, and sacrifice of our POW/MIA service members and their families. Their courage will never be disregarded, and our nation remains steadfast in its commitment to accounting for all who have not yet returned home. Please join us in keeping our nation's POWs, MIAs, and their Families in our thoughts, and prayers. We offer them our enduring support along with a promise that we will ***“NEVER FORGET!”***