

# Barack Obama Names Tom Hanks, Ellen DeGeneres and More Presidential Medal of Freedom Winners

by CORINNE HELLER | Wed, Nov 16, 2016 2:04 PM



Getty Images; AP Photo

Two of the most well-liked stars in the world are headed back to the White House to receive the nation's highest civilian honor.

**Tom Hanks** and **Ellen DeGeneres** are set to receive the Presidential

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The Oscar-winning actor, often dubbed "America's dad," and the Emmy-winning talk show host, actress and comedienne are among 21 recipients of the award, which is presented to "individuals who have made especially meritorious contributions to the security or

national interests of the United States, to world peace, or to cultural or other significant public or private endeavors."



## Photos

Tom Hanks: Movie Star!

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The other honorees include actors **Robert De Niro** and **Robert Redford**, performers **Bruce Springsteen**, **Cicely Tyson** and **Diana Ross**, *SNL* creator **Lorne Michaels**, former NBA stars **Michael Jordan** and **Kareem Abdul-Jabbar**, recently retired and beloved Los Angeles Dodgers announcer **Vin Scully**, polymath physicist **Richard Garwin**, **Bill Gates** and wife **Melinda Gates**, architect **Frank Gehry**, mathematician and computer scientist **Margaret H. Hamilton**, artist **Maya Lin**, attorney **Newt Minow** and President of Miami Dade College **Eduardo Padrón**. Rear Admiral **Grace Hopper**, known as "Amazing Grace" and "the first lady of software," and Blackfeet Tribal community leader **Elouise Cobell** will be honored posthumously.

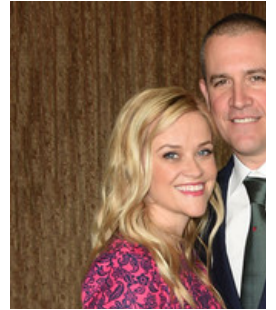
"The Presidential Medal of Freedom is not just our nation's highest

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where we come from, have the opportunity to change this country for the bet Obama said in a White House statement. "From scientists, j' ' anthropists, and public servants to activists, athletes, and artists, these 21 individuals have helped push America forward, inspiring m ns of people around the world along the way."

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Most of the performers have met Obama before. The president has appeared on *The Ellen DeGeneres Show* several times and presented Hanks, De Niro, Springsteen and Tyson with Kennedy Center Honors for their contributions to American culture. Redford and Ross received the honor in 2005 and 2007 from then-President George W. Bush.

The presentation of the 2016 Presidential Medal of Freedom awards will be livestreamed on [www.whitehouse.gov/live](http://www.whitehouse.gov/live).

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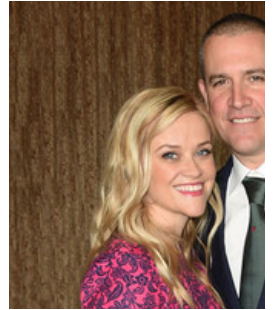
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