

It is time to honor the *Borinqueneers*

➤ Who are the “*Borinqueneers*”?

Officially known as the 65th Infantry Regiment of the Puerto Rico National Guard, this unit has been an active-duty unit since 1899 and has served with distinction in conflicts such as World War Two, the Korean War and the ongoing War on Terror. The *Borinqueneers* is the only unit in United States military history to have been transferred from the active Army into the National Guard in 1959. They were the largest and longest standing, segregated Latino-American military unit in U.S. history.

➤ What did the *Borinqueneers* do?

During the Korean War, the 65th Regiment fought gallantly through some of the war’s most difficult battles, receiving special praise from General Douglas MacArthur, Commander in Chief of the United Nations forces engaged in the conflict. By war’s end the unit had amassed an impressive number of individual medals and awards, including 10 Distinguished Service Crosses. 750 of their members were killed in the battlefields of Korea and more than a 100 of them remain missing to this day.

➤ What do we want for the *Borinqueneers*?

We are a group of Puerto Rican university students with the Córdova and Fernós Program at The Washington Center, who in association with the *Borinqueneers* Congressional Gold Medal Alliance, wish to convince Congress to finally recognize and honor the sacrifice of the *Borinqueneers* by awarding the unit and its veterans the Congressional Gold Medal.

➤ Why should Congress issue this award?

The youngest *Borinqueneers* veterans are about 80 years old. This is our one chance to exert some influence in Congress, and make sure that the *Borinqueneers* are recognized while some of them are still alive. Similar segregated military units have already well deservedly received the Congressional Gold Medal and it would be only fair for Congress to extend this distinction to the *Borinqueneers* and let them join these other veteran groups that have been granted this prestigious decoration for their service.

➤ What can you do for the *Borinqueneers*?

We should not allow the legendary 65th Infantry Regiment to become a fading footnote in the history of Latino-Americans and Puerto Ricans in the United States; it is time for **YOU** to join them and take a stand! Two thirds of each chamber of Congress is needed to co-sponsor the bill and award the Congressional Gold Medal to this renowned unit. We ask **YOU** to contact your lawmakers and demand that they take action **NOW!**

“The Puerto Ricans forming the ranks of the gallant 65th Infantry give daily proof on the battlefields of Korea of their courage, determination and resolute will to victory, their invincible loyalty to the United States and their fervent devotion to those immutable principles of human relations which the Americans of the Continent and of Puerto Rico have in common. They are writing a brilliant record of heroism in battle and I am indeed proud to have them under my command. I wish that we could count on many more like them.”

General of the Army Douglas MacArthur