



## News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **SOLDIER MISSING FROM KOREAN WAR IDENTIFIED**

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing from the Korean War, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

Army Sgt. Melvin E. Wolfe, 18, of San Diego, Calif., will be buried Sept. 23, in Boulder City, Nev. In late November 1950 Wolfe and members of the K Company, 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT) were deployed along the east side of the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea when they came under attack by Communist forces. The 31st RCT began a fighting withdrawal to a more defensible position near Hagaru-ri, south of the reservoir. Following the battle, Wolfe was reported missing in action on Dec. 12, 1950.

In September 2004, a joint U.S./Democratic People's Republic of Korea (D.P.R.K) team excavated a mass grave south of the Pungnyuri-gang inlet of the Chosin Reservoir. During this excavation operation the team recovered human remains from at least 32 individuals and material evidence such as uniform fragments worn by U.S. service members in the 1950s.

In the identification of Wolfe, scientists from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools including mitochondrial DNA – which matched Wolfe's nieces.

Using modern technology, identifications continue to be made from remains that were excavated from North Korea or turned over by North Korean officials. More than 7,900 American service members are unaccounted-for from the Korean War.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call (703) 699-1127.

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