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Former White House Military Chef Mongiello Speaks at Veterans Monument Ceremony

SHELBY, N.C. (November 4, 2026) — Retired 30-year U.S. Navy veteran and former White House Master Chef Martin C. J. “Marti” Mongiello will deliver the keynote address at Shelby's Veterans Day ceremony on Wednesday, November 11, during the dedication of a new two-ton granite monument honoring military service.

The Veterans Day parade begins at 10:00 a.m. in Uptown Shelby, followed by the ceremony at 11:00 a.m. at the historic Cleveland County Courthouse, now home to the Earl Scruggs Center, 103 S. Lafayette Street. This year's theme, “Honoring All Our Veterans: America's 250th,” connects the nation's founding generation with veterans of every era.

Mongiello's address will place special emphasis on combat-experienced men and women who lived and fought in the area that later became Cleveland County during the American Revolutionary War. He will also recognize veterans of subsequent conflicts, reflecting on 250 years of sacrifice, courage, and service across every branch of the U.S. Armed Forces.

“Veterans Day belongs to every generation that answered the call,” Mongiello said. “From the Carolina frontier to the deserts of Iraq and Afghanistan, our freedom rests on the courage of people whose names we must continue to remember.”

A fully retired, injured, and disabled Navy veteran, Mongiello served for 30 years, including assignments with the White House Military Office, service as a White House Chef, and as a General Manager at Camp David. His career included duty inside the mountainside Orange One nuclear facility, service at Korea's Demilitarized Zone, and five deployments supporting Operation Southern Watch, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom, with boots in the sand. He has worked with seven U.S. Presidents across a range of issues spanning the Post 9-11 GI Bill, VA Home Loan legislative changes, veteran employment issues, and vetrepreneur ownership of small businesses.

Mongiello's historical work explores lesser-known Revolutionary War patriots. He recently spoke about Mary McKeehan Patton, who helped supply gunpowder for the Patriot cause, at the Chapman Cultural Center in Spartanburg, South Carolina, and has delivered historical presentations at the South Carolina Archives Center in Columbia. He has published 16 books and been featured worldwide in 170+ newspapers and magazines as well as on the TODAY Show.

He offered special thanks to Emanuel Hunt Jr. for his mentorship and leadership through the Cleveland County veterans’ community. “Emanuel has helped keep recognition of our veterans at the center of community life,” Mongiello said. “I salute him and am grateful for his counsel and dedication to those who served.”

Immediately following the Veterans Day ceremony, the American Revolutionary War Living History Center™ will present Susannah Twitty Medal of Bravery™ gold medals to several girls from the area. Named for Susannah Twitty Graham Miller, a young patriot of the Carolina frontier, the awards celebrate young women's courage, service, resilience, and leadership. The presentation will link the bravery of Revolutionary-era girls and women to the promise of a new generation.

Mongiello's next scheduled speaking appearance will be at the Veteran Ready Summit, December 13–15, 2026, at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York. The event brings together military leaders, employers, and advocates to improve opportunities for veterans and military families.

Mongiello is President of the United States Presidential Service Center® and Senior Curator and General Manager of the United States Presidential Culinary Museum® in Grover, North Carolina.

Additional Information:

https://www.MartinMongiello.com https://VeteranReadySummit.org https://www.arwlhc.com

About the United States Presidential Service Center®

The United States Presidential Service Center® is a national educational, cultural, and historical organization dedicated to preserving and interpreting the stories of service, leadership, innovation, diplomacy, and citizenship that have shaped the United States Presidency for 250 years starting with General Washington's Lifeguard bodyguard unit. Through museums, educational initiatives, awards, publications, events, and public programs, the organization seeks to inspire future generations through the lessons of America's past.

About the American Revolutionary War Living History Center™, LLC

The American Revolutionary War Living History Center™ is dedicated to preserving, researching, interpreting, and presenting the people, places, battles, culture, and daily life of the American Revolution, with particular emphasis on the Southern Campaign and Carolina Backcountry. Through immersive educational experiences, living-history programming, historical interpretation, and public engagement, the organization works to keep the stories of America's founding generation alive for future generations.

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