



Warrior and Family Care™

Healing with Honor

The USO's mission to lift the spirits of America's troops and families hasn't changed since our founding in 1941, but the challenges facing our men and women in uniform and their families continue to evolve and as expected the USO continues to adapt to meet their needs. A constant since World War II has been the USO's support for healing heroes during and after major conflicts.

Over the past decade, the widespread use of body armor, rapid evacuation from the battlefield, and advances in military medicine resulted in many more troops surviving injuries that would have been fatal in past conflicts. More than 40,000 troops have been visibly wounded in the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, and some estimate more than 300,000 troops are living with invisible wounds, such as post-traumatic stress or traumatic brain injury. These wounded, ill and injured service men and women and their families face many difficult challenges upon their return, and the USO is doing all we can to sustain their hope for the happy and fulfilling future they so richly deserve. To this end, the USO has developed a comprehensive long-term program, USO Warrior and Family Care, to support the continuum of care that will give these troops the best chance for healing with honor, and provide the support their families and caregivers so urgently need.

As the first wounded troops began to come home in the earliest days of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, many USO Centers near major military medical facilities, stepped in to support those men and women and their families. Since then, our volunteers and staff have provided a caring and compassionate presence at a time when emotions like fear, despair and uncertainty are prevalent. From aiding in communication, assisting with travel and lodging arrangements, providing essential items such as toiletries and clothing to simply listening, the USO is committed to making one of the darkest times in a family's life as positive as it can be.

The USO embedded a Center in the Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility (CASF) at Ramstein Air Base in Germany in 2003 to support troops being prepped for transit to the United States. In 2008, the USO built the USO Warrior Center at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC) in Germany to further its commitment to America's wounded, ill and injured troops. Our USO teams in Europe and the U.S. have the expertise and resources to respond to their needs.

In addition, the USO has embarked on a fundraising campaign, Operation Enduring Care, to fund the construction of two USO Warrior and Family Centers, one at Fort Belvoir Community Hospital in Virginia and the other at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland; endow these two centers, and fund USO programs to support these troops, their families and caregivers, as well as families of the fallen.

In some cases, military commands worldwide will call upon the USO to provide health and welfare support for their recovering wounded. We answer those requests with USO Warrior and Family Care Day Rooms. A USO Day Room provides connectivity, some options for entertainment and a place to simply take a break. USO Day Rooms create a USO presence when a traditional USO facility is not an option. The USO supports more than 40 Day Rooms across the globe including many locations in the combat zone.

USO's support of wounded, ill and injured troops, their families and caregivers continues today and has expanded to encompass many critical facets of life, including physical and recreational activities,

behavioral health, family strengthening, education and employment training, and community reintegration. Within these six domains, USO Warrior and Family Care's programming to support this critical group contains multiple organic programs and collaborative efforts with best-in-class organizations. Our goal for these healing heroes and their families is to sustain hope and instill confidence that they can achieve that happy and fulfilling future. We want to keep their families together and keep the families strong. We want them to have a plan for the future with an active support network in place.

Physical Health & Recreation

Health and wellness are critical to the emotional well-being of our warrior community. It allows these men and women to return to the vigorous physical activity that was their norm prior to their injury. These men and women learn the important lesson that they can accomplish almost anything they set out to do and often share this experience with their families. Three of the important programs made possible by the USO's partnerships with best in class organizations include:

Warrior Games: The USO will collaborate with the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the US Olympic Committee to support the Warrior Games in 2013 for the fourth straight year. The games are an annual competitive sports event for more than 200 wounded, ill and injured athletes from the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Coast Guard, Air Force and Special Operations Command. In February, USO Warrior and Family Care and USO San Diego were also on hand during the Marine Corps Trials, held at Camp Pendleton in California, as wounded, ill and injured Marines competed for a chance to represent the nation, and the Marine Corps, at the Warrior Games. The games are about more than medals and records – they represent pride, sacrifice, courage and teamwork.

Ride 2 Recovery: Whether it's climbing a steep mountain or racing across a flat road with their bicycle adapted to fit one leg, one arm or whatever their personal challenge might be, Ride 2 Recovery participants conquer their fears and prove they are a warrior even away from the battlefield. The USO collaborates with Ride 2 Recovery, providing adaptive bicycles and support for Project Hero- a cycling training group that prepares ride participants for their upcoming events. In addition, the USO Mobile will be onsite to provide lunch and support for seven rides in 2013.

Rivers of Recovery: In partnership with the nonprofit organization, Rivers of Recovery, the USO offers fly fishing retreats to wounded, ill or injured service members and couples with special emphasis on female service members. These excursions are more than time away from the stresses of multiple doctors' appointments and adjusting to life as a wounded, ill or injured service member. Instructors use fly fishing to help participants bond with one another, share experiences and further their recovery. The simple act of tying a fly and catching a fish can bring couples closer and similarly break down the walls often put up by female wounded troops, who in most cases, have never participated in a female-exclusive event. In 2012, the USO in partnership with Rivers of Recovery hosted 10 excursions and plans to host excursions for 24 service men and women and spouses in 2013.

Behavioral Health Programs

USO provides a continuum of care from the battlefield to the community to provide troops, families and caregivers a broad array of programs to help them throughout each stage of their recovery.

USO Centers: Immediately after 9/11/2001 and the start of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, USO Centers around the world began to play a crucial role in the recovery and reintegration of our nation's healing heroes and their families. Through local community support, celebrity visits, field trips, concerts, dinners and other impactful events, USO staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly to ensure that all who serve and sacrifice know just how much America appreciates them. USO Centers near major

military medical facilities, such as USO of Metropolitan Washington supporting the two major medical facilities in the nation's capital, USO Europe supporting Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and USO San Antonio supporting the Brooke Army Medical Center, focus on important programs and activities designed to combat against stress and despair. Around the globe, USO Centers help healing heroes and their families reintegrate into their communities and their "new normal."

Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility (CASF) USO: In April 2003, the USO embedded a USO Center in the middle of the Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility (CASF) at Ramstein Air Base in Germany. CASF USO provides a critical home-away-from-home environment for the wounded awaiting transport to the United States following medical treatment at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center. Whether it is a hot meal, fresh clothing or a friendly smile, the staff and volunteers of the CASF USO let our nation's heroes know that America is here to support them. The CASF is supported by more than 40 active volunteers with some volunteers serving at both the CASF and other Kaiserslautern-area locations.

USO Warrior Center: For many wounded and injured troops, Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC) in Germany is the first stop in their medical evacuation back home to the United States and the first time they become aware of their wounds and the new, uncertain future that lies before them. The USO Warrior Center at Landstuhl provides a comforting shoulder to lean on in the difficult days and weeks after sustaining those injuries. During a warrior's brief time as an outpatient at LRMC, the USO Warrior Center offers the compassion and care of home, with a comfortable "living room" style lounge furnished with reclining sofas, cable television, a fully equipped kitchen, cyber cafe, telephone stations and multiple gaming centers. The USO Warrior Center staff and volunteers work tirelessly to support the thousands of wounded, ill and injured who transition through Germany before returning to the United States for additional medical care or rejoining their units on the battlefield after recuperating from wounds or injuries. The Warrior Center averages 4,000 monthly visits.

USO Warrior and Family Centers (Fort Belvoir, Virginia and Bethesda, Maryland): The USO has made significant progress in the construction of our two new USO Warrior and Family Centers. On February 5, 2013 we opened the doors to our largest USO Center, the USO Warrior and Family Center at Fort Belvoir, with more than 22,000 square feet dedicated to serving our nation's wounded, ill and injured troops and their caregivers as well as the active duty and military families of Fort Belvoir. On November 7, 2012 we broke ground on our second USO Warrior and Family Center to be located at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. These centers will offer a comprehensive array of specialized services and programs in a supportive and home-like setting including movie theaters, classrooms, sports lounges, business centers, healing gardens and more, created expressly for our nation's healing heroes and their families.

USO Caregivers Conference: Caregivers Conferences provide husbands, wives, parents, hospital staff and other caregivers supporting wounded, ill or injured troops practical advice and valuable information about available resources. Sessions address such topics as post-traumatic stress, caregiver boundaries and intimacy, compassion fatigue, parenting, childhood grief and caregiver resiliency. The first Caregivers Conference of 2013 was held in February at Camp Pendleton in collaboration with the US Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Battalion – West. More than 100 caregivers attended the event and spoke candidly about the issues they face seeking advice from subject matter experts and fellow caregivers. Two additional conferences will be held in 2013.

USO/Easter Seals Caregiver Resiliency Curriculum: These intimate workshops address the two medical conditions that have the most impact on troops behavior - traumatic brain injury (TBI) and post-traumatic stress (PTS). During the workshop, caregivers explore the causes of TBI and PTS, explore resources and outline strategies to help caregivers better communicate with their service member and

improve the quality of life.

USO Day Room and Command Support: When the comforts of home are not readily available, USO Dayrooms can be a temporary home or respite for the wounded, families and medical support staff. The USO supports wounded, ill and injured troops at 30 warrior recovery centers, traumatic brain injury clinics and combat stress clinics in Afghanistan. USO Day Rooms are located at military hospitals, medical facilities, and Warrior Transition Units throughout the U.S. and overseas. Rooms can include TVs, furniture, gaming systems, refrigerators and other comfort necessities.

Warrior Care Packs and R&R Duffels: In response to feedback received through a survey sent to USO Centers worldwide, Warrior Care Packs and R&R Duffels were created to support our nation's wounded, ill and injured in the field and at home. Warrior Care Packs contain clothing and toiletry items and are distributed to wounded, ill, and injured service members recovering at military medical facilities in Europe, Southwest Asia, and the U.S. R&R Duffels contain bedding, toiletries, and a few comforts of home and will be distributed through USO Centers serving remote medical facilities and medevac flights in Europe and Southwest Asia. We distributed 1000 of the Warrior Care Packs in 2012 and the first distribution of the R&R Duffels is planned for Spring 2013.

Project Sanctuary: Active duty, veteran and wounded warrior families participate in six-day therapeutic retreat in the mountains of Colorado. The focus is on supporting the family as a whole unit. The retreats utilize therapeutic recreation as a way to reconnect and reintegrate along with sessions in "healthy marriages" and "finance." Past retreat successes have strengthened the founding principles that healing takes time and requires the family to be together in an environment in which they feel comfortable. Activities include horseback riding, hiking, fishing, snow skiing, art and all sessions carry a therapeutic component tailored to each individual's physical and emotional needs. In 2012, the USO provided 24 military families the opportunity to participate in Project Sanctuary Retreats. This year the USO will support nearly a dozen retreats.

game on Nation: The USO and game on Nation are working together to provide resiliency support for medical providers, caregivers and mortuary affairs staff that are often the silent heroes who assist our recovering service members and families of the fallen. Through the use of improvisation and laughter, game on Nation facilitates half-day trainings for various military units.

Family Strengthening Programs

Family strengthening programs focus on an extraordinary group of unknown heroes – the selfless family members and caregivers who support our nation's wounded, ill and injured warriors.

Taking Care of You: Children's entertainer and educator Trevor Romain and his foundation, the Comfort Crew for Military Kids, have teamed up with USO to support military children who are dealing with a variety of challenges. "Taking Care of You" kits are distributed to children of wounded, ill, or injured troops. In 2012, 1,730 kits were distributed to military installations worldwide.

Summer Camps Supporting Military Families: Collaborations with best-in-class organizations like the National Military Family Association, the Armed Services YMCA, and the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, afford the USO the opportunity to provide our nation's healing heroes and their families, as well as families of the fallen with the chance to reconnect, reintegrate and rejuvenate. Teaming with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, the USO hosted nine camps for families of the fallen in 2012.

Support for Families of the Fallen: The USO is committed to supporting the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice and we have supported every dignified transfer at Dover Air Force Base since March 1991. At 41 USO airport centers across the country, our staff and volunteers offer comfort, respite and support to the families of the fallen. They work with TSA to ease the security process and coordinate with airlines to make sure these special passengers are treated with the care and respect they deserve. They meet the families at stops along the way and are with them when they arrive at Dover. The USO is with the families on the tarmac as the plane arrives bearing their loved one, and for every step of their return. USO Centers are located in the heart of Dover Air Force Base to support families of the fallen as well as inside the Air Force Mortuary Affairs complex to support the troops who are assigned there. In 2012, the USO supported more than 3,000 family members, attending 310 dignified transfers at Dover. The USO also supports the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice through our partnerships with organizations such as the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) and Fisher House, as well as the support received at various USO Centers across the United States. The USO and TAPS also provide Survivor Resource Kits to newly bereaved family members. Filled with comfort items, books of support, personal notes and information these kits provide a warm embrace in the form of a carefully crafted package. Each kit is carefully tailored to the specific family's circumstance of loss, relationship to the deceased, cause of death and other family needs that are shared with us. For our nation's smallest heroes, the USO supports TAPS Good Grief Camps. The camps provide a safe atmosphere for children to connect with others coping with similar feelings, helping them to establish a support system. No matter what the hour or the need, the USO is there for the families of the fallen.

TAPS Good Grief Camps and Spouse Seminars: The USO, in collaboration with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), hosted grief camps throughout 2012 for families of the fallen. Good Grief Camps provide children and teenagers with a safe and supportive atmosphere to participate in activities, learn grief coping skills, establish and identify support systems, and create awareness that they are not alone in the grief of their loved one. In 2012, we hosted six Good Grief Camps and Spouse Seminars and 3 USO TAPS Kids Campouts supporting 1,135 family members.

Stronger Families Oxygen Seminars: The USO/Oxygen program helps wounded, ill or injured couples strengthen their relationship- working on tough issues in a fun and nonthreatening environment. Couples learn to improve their communication, better understand each other's needs, resolve conflict, rekindle romance and find renewed hope. In 2012, the USO hosted 11 USO Oxygen Seminars from California to the D.C. Metro area. In 2013, we will be collaborating with the Army Warrior Transition Command's Chaplain Corps to deliver the program to help all Warrior Transition Units across the U.S.

Education, Employment and Community Reintegration

These programs support wounded, ill and injured troops, their families and caregivers as they transition into the civilian workforce. Veteran unemployment can be dramatically reduced by knowledge and opportunity while building self-esteem.

Operation Jumpstart: A collaboration between Syracuse University's Institute for Veterans and Military Families and the USO, this program offers a two-day workshop focused on entrepreneurship and small business ownership to wounded, ill and injured service members, their spouse and caregivers. During this workshop participants learn if starting a business is right for them, if their business idea is feasible and how to take the next step forward on their entrepreneurial journey. Entrepreneurship and small business ownership is a key opportunity for service members and their families, who are natural entrepreneurs, possessing the skills, experience and leadership to start businesses and shape their future.

USO/Aspen Pointe Peer Navigator Program: The USO works with AspenPointe, one of the largest nonprofit organizations serving individuals and families with behavioral health issues, substance abuse, employment, career development, education, housing, jail diversion/reintegration, telephonic wellness and provider network services. The AspenPointe Peer Navigator Program based in Colorado Springs seeks to serve all wounded, ill and injured troops who desire a smooth transition to civilian life. Through a peer support system with veteran mentors with similar experiences, the program works to help the integration process be less stressful and much smoother- providing a much needed “concierge” type service to these men and women to navigate the winding road of transition. The USO works to identify healing heroes near Ft. Carson, Colorado and assist them and their families connecting them with AspenPointe and community resources.

Career Opportunity Days: The USO, in collaboration with Hire Heroes USA offer Career Opportunity Days (CODs) for wounded, ill and injured troops, spouses and caregivers. A COD is a non-traditional career fair where each employer connects with troops based on interest and background. Troops are pre-matched with employers who conduct mock interviews and provide feedback. The use of mock interviews provides an additional level of support for transitioning service members to meet with employers who are ready to hire. These CODs are limited to 10-15 employers and 40-60 service men and women attendees to ensure the size and magnitude of these events provide an intimate atmosphere. Since the program’s inception 97% of troops would recommend this program to fellow service members. In 2013, the USO plans to support 31 Career Opportunity Days expanding to 18 new locations.

USO /Hire Heroes USA Workshops: The USO, in partnership with Hire Heroes USA, hosts transition workshops for wounded, ill and injured troops, their spouses, and caregivers. Workshops focus on resume writing, interview skills, professional work practices and translating prior military experience into a civilian career. Employers attend these workshops and conduct mock interviews to provide a civilian perspective on what employers are looking for in new employees. In 2013, the USO plans to host 67 workshops for wounded, ill or injured troops and caregivers in 38 locations. These workshops complement the existing transition assistance offered by the military, Department of Defense and Department of Labor to provide yet another tool in the toolbox for transitioning service members.

RenovatingHope: The USO launched a new program in collaboration with the nonprofit organization RenovatingHope. Through this collaboration, the USO will support recently discharged wounded, ill and injured service men and women and their families by providing basic housing rehabilitation services. The troops are referred directly from military installation commands and are identified as having an immediate need, are physically unable to make the repairs themselves, and/or do not have sufficient income to hire qualified contractors to complete the work.

Public Service Announcements

For years, the USO has produced a powerful Public Service Announcement program, educating America about the USO and the tremendous service of our nation’s troops and their families. As part of our commitment to educate the American people about the invisible wounds of war, the USO has launched a Public Service Announcement (PSA) about these life-changing issues. More than 300,000 American troops suffer from invisible wounds - post traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury. “Portraits” is a documentary style PSA that features service members who proudly answered the call to duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, and now live with invisible wounds. These stories and more can be viewed at www.USOInvisibleWounds.org.

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