



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Elmo and Friends Kick Off Seven-Month Sesame Street/USO Tour and Take the USO's *Every Moment Counts* Campaign On the Road**

*The Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families to create more than 200 moments in 32 states and recognize a "Moment Maker of the Month"*

**Arlington, VA (April 9, 2014)** - The [Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families](#) – the [USO's](#) longest running, traveling tour based on [Sesame Street's](#) award-winning [Military Families Initiative](#) – has kicked off its seven-month, stateside adventure. The Sesame Street/USO tour is scheduled to perform more than 200 shows at 69 military bases in 32 states by late October. The tour premiered April 4<sup>th</sup> with two performances at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois.

"*Sesame Street* is thrilled to once again be partnering with our friends at the USO to bring the *Sesame Street* characters to military installations across the U.S.," said H. Melvin Ming, President and CEO of Sesame Workshop. "Our military families will always hold a special place in the hearts of the *Sesame Street* family, and we thank the USO and all of the troops for allowing Elmo and the *Sesame Street* gang to share in their moment making memories."

This is the sixth year the tour will create heartfelt moments and memories for our littlest heroes and military families through its 30-minute character performances. The *Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families* tour joined forces this year with USO's *Every Moment Counts* campaign – a year-round, national initiative that rallies Americans to honor and create real, everyday moments that matter for our nation's troops and their families.

Each month, *Sesame Street* and the USO will honor a local military hero with the "Moment Maker of the Month" title. Each service member volunteer named will be highlighted on the *Sesame Street* and USO blog, and be recognized for his or her assistance in bringing the tour to life on base.

"Over the past six amazing years, the *Sesame Street/USO* tour has delivered special family moments to more than 400,000 military children and their parents stationed at locations around the world. Judging by the smiles on everyone's faces, it is clear that Elmo and his band of enthusiastic friends have made a very positive impact in their lives," said Brig. Gen. (Ret.)

John I. Pray, Jr., USO President and CEO. “We are incredibly grateful to be working with the Sesame Street team. We know they fully understand the unique challenges facing today’s military families and that they fully share our commitment to be always by their side to help them cope with these challenges.”

Elmo, Katie, Cookie Monster and Grover will continue their quest to make every moment count when they roll onto Capitol Hill in their souped up Sesame Street/USO tour bus on May 21<sup>st</sup> to attend the bi-annual USO Service Project event. The furry monsters will join lawmakers, *Sesame Street* and the USO at the Rayburn House Office Building from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. to help by assembling care packages for wounded, ill and injured troops.

The *Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families* has toured the globe since July 2008 and, through the power of song and dance, has skillfully taken its message of facing fears and embracing change to more than 412,000 troops and military families. With help from Katie, a military child who is moving to a new place, and all of her friends, the tour has performed 735 shows on 144 military installations in 33 states and 11 countries. To learn more about the show, upcoming tour stops and great new resources, like *Sesame Street’s* The Big Moving Adventure app, visit [uso.org/sesame](http://uso.org/sesame).

#### **MULTIMEDIA:**

USO/Sesame Street B-roll: <https://uso.box.net/shared/ak19b33oel>

USO/Sesame Street Tour Photos: <http://bit.ly/HtSrLO>

USO/Sesame Street Tour Photo: <https://uso.box.net/shared/hujhnttji>

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#### **About the USO**

*The USO lifts the spirits of America’s troops and their families millions of times each year at hundreds of places worldwide. We provide a touch of home through centers at airports and military bases in the U.S. and abroad, top quality entertainment and innovative programs and services. We also provide critical support to those who need us most, including forward-deployed troops, military families, wounded warriors, troops in transition and families of the fallen. The USO is a private, non-profit organization, not a government agency. Our programs and services are made possible by the American people, support of our corporate partners and the dedication of our volunteers and staff.*

*In addition to individual donors and corporate sponsors, the USO is supported by President’s Circle Partners: American Airlines, AT&T, BNSF Railway, The Coca-Cola Company, Grand Canyon University, JCPenney, Jeep, Johnson & Johnson, Kroger, Northrop Grumman Corporation and TriWest Healthcare Alliance and Worldwide Strategic Partners: BAE Systems, BIC, The Boeing Company, ConAgra Foods, FedEx, Lockheed Martin, Microsoft Corporation, Procter & Gamble, TKS Telepost Kabel-Service Kaiserslautern GmbH & Co. KG and Wawa Inc. We are also supported through the United Way and Combined Federal Campaign (CFC-11381). To join us in this patriotic mission, and to learn more about the USO, please visit [uso.org](http://uso.org).*

#### **About Sesame Workshop**

*Sesame Workshop is the nonprofit educational organization behind Sesame Street, the landmark television program that reaches millions of children every day in [more than 150 countries](#). The Workshop’s [mission](#) is to use*

*the educational power of media to help children everywhere reach their highest potential. Delivered through a variety of platforms, Sesame Workshop develops research-based content – including television programs, books, games, mobile apps and community engagement initiatives – that supports early childhood learning, helps prepare children for school, and addresses developmental needs. The Workshop’s programs are tailored to the needs of specific regions and focus on topics that help young children and families develop critical skills for lifelong learning. For more information, visit us at [www.sesameworkshop.org](http://www.sesameworkshop.org).*