



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 18, 2014

Media Contact:

Sarah Camille Hipp

Office (703) 579-0882

schipp@uso.org

USO Fort Hood Reopens Doors to Troops and Military Families with a New and Improved Facility

Renovated USO center to provide services and programs for more than 70,000 annual visitors in the Fort Hood community

Fort Hood, Texas (December 18, 2014) – Fort Hood military leadership joined the USO at the newly renovated USO Fort Hood Center for its grand reopening ceremony on Wednesday, December 17. After a three and a half month restoration, USO staff and volunteers welcomed guests into the new and improved home away from home for the Fort Hood military community.

The ceremony included a variety of speakers, an invocation, national anthem and a patriotic medley performed by the USO Show Troupe. Remarks by the USO leadership reminisced about the history of the USO location and how it has adapted to fit the needs of the community.

“USO Fort Hood was established in August 2001. Five years later, we opened the doors to Building 1871 and have served over 400,000 troops and family members, offering a place to take a break, to relax, to take time and breathe,” said Isabel Hubbard, USO Fort Hood Center Director. “This is what the USO hopes to convey to the troops and families of Fort Hood—we are here to support and lift their spirits.”

From new paint to new flooring, the center is now a refreshed, home-like environment. All of the improvements made to USO Fort Hood were completed in order to better support the needs of Fort Hood troops and their families, while showing them gratitude for their service and sacrifices.

“USO Fort Hood is an example that shows the world that the USO is serious about being always by the side of troops and families, no matter where they serve,” said J.D. Crouch II, USO CEO and President. “Our centers are also places where troops and families can begin the process of planning for whatever comes next in their lives. We are committed to serving the needs of

active duty service members, and that includes helping them when they begin to think about their transition back to civilian life. That's what it means to be always by their side."

The newly-renovated USO Fort Hood Center will help provide a touch of home to an estimated 80,000 troops and military families who pass through the two USO locations at Fort Hood each year. Visitors will now find a brighter, more spacious and inviting facility for active duty troops and their families to enjoy. Fort Hood Garrison Commander Col. Matthew Elledge thanked the generous USO staff and volunteers for their dedication to the military community.

"[USO Fort Hood] couldn't get this done without our volunteers," said Garrison Commander Col. Matthew Elledge. "You couldn't do programs like Family Game Night, Story Time, and Movies on the Lawn.... And actually the most important thing you all do for us is you are there when we leave and you are there when we come back with smiles, hugs and givebacks and we really appreciate that."

A ribbon-cutting followed the remarks and afterward guests were invited to tour the newly renovated center and see all of the improvements. In addition, the renovation would not have been possible without the generosity of Cove Meadows Management Corp., which donated \$25,000 to USO Fort Hood to help update the facility.

More about USO Fort Hood

In 2006, USO Fort Hood moved to its current location, a historic World War II barrack building. On the main floor, visitors will find the historical timeline of the establishment of Camp Hood to Fort Hood to today's mechanized Army. The first level also features comfortable seating areas, computer stations, gathering tables and a snack bar. The upper level offers more computers, a 21 seat movie theater, six gaming stations, and more. In addition, the main reception desk and museum pieces were relocated throughout the center, a children's play area was added and all seating and electronics in the theater and gaming areas have been updated.

The USO Fort Hood team, which also supports National Guard and Reserve troops from all branches through its USO Fort Hood North Center, delivers many popular morale-boosting and family-strengthening programs, including:

- **USO Story Time Early Literacy Workshop** – a workshop engaging military families with preschoolers 0-4 years of age on a bi-weekly basis offering a whole grain breakfast, coffee for the parents, followed by reading time where the featured book is read aloud to the group, and finishes up with craft time helping the little ones develop their fine motor skills appropriate to their age level. All featured books possess a positive self-image and positive family values.
- **Movies on the Lawn** – a mobile program bringing an evening of family entertainment to communities on Fort Hood. Once a month from April to October the USO Fort Hood travels to military housing areas to set up a 20 foot inflatable screen to show a family-friendly movie and serve a variety of movie time snacks and drinks.
- **Couples Date Night** – movie nights under the Texas Stars for military couples. Once a month couples can reserve a table for two, select their dinner choice and watch a classic love story on an inflatable movie screen.

- **For Wounded, Ill and Injured** – the USO Fort Hood-sponsored physical fitness center allows wounded, ill and injured service members a more intimate and private setting to work out; transition workshops with best in class partner Hire Heroes USA and Career Development Days.
- **For Families of the Fallen** – USO centers coordinate with the causality assistance officer and USO Families of the Fallen program, escorting family members along the route of the dignified transfer of fallen service members' remains; the Trevor Romain Memory Box is customized to meet a child's specific needs when dealing with the loss of a family member and contains educational and comforting resources.

With support from USO Fort Hood staff and volunteers, the new center is open to visitors Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday through Sunday from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.

USO Photos by Rebecca Crocker: <http://bit.ly/1xsn3qe>

###

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, Clark Construction Group, LLC, 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, Harris Teeter, 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 important mission, and to learn more about the USO, please visit uso.org.