



## Fact Sheet

The USO lifts the spirits of America's troops and military families. We're the way America says, "Thank you" for all they do through delivering highly valued programs, morale-boosting services and engaging entertainment. Our **scope, scale, presence, reach** and **knowledge**, and the resulting **trust** of the U.S. military, gives the USO the unparalleled capacity to meet the wide range of constantly changing needs of troops and families. Our footprint is reflected in nearly 9 million visits to USO centers from South Korea to Germany, from Okinawa to Afghanistan, at training bases and airports across the country and for those serving on ships and squadrons deployed around the world.

Today's USO is ***always by their side***, continuously adapting to the needs of our troops and their families by supporting and comforting, connecting and entertaining in new and imaginative ways. USO's programs and services are made possible by the support of our individual donors, corporate sponsors and the dedication of our volunteers and staff.

Since 2009, the USO has engaged TARP Worldwide, an independent, third party customer experience research organization, to conduct the "**TellUSO Sound Off Survey.**" The survey provides the USO with valuable data about what troops and their families really want and need from the USO and how well we are delivering on our spirit lifting promise. The online survey opens for a month-long period during the fall and is conducted among active duty military and their families. TellUSO Survey data helps the USO make informed decisions regarding the allocation of resources and improvements in program delivery. Highlights include:

- For the third year in a row since the baseline was established in 2009, the USO's Value Score has increased from **91%** to **94%**.
- In 2012, all troops and their families surveyed agree that the USO:
  - Boosts the morale of troops (**98%**)
  - Tells them their country supports them (**95%**)
  - Eases their separation from friends and family (**93%**)
- USO Staff and volunteers provide excellent care and support Troops and families were very satisfied with:
  - Staff knowledge and support information: (**83%**)
  - Staff helpfulness: (**85%**)
  - Staff friendliness: (**86%**)
- Troops and their families rated the following programs and services as **the most important and most used**:
  - USO Centers
  - USO Warrior and Family Care
  - Free Phone Calls
  - USO Photo Books
  - USO Events and Entertainment
  - United Through Reading's Military Program
  - With You All The Way

**USO CENTERS:** The USO provides programs, entertainment and services at more than 160 USO locations worldwide, including Afghanistan, Kuwait, UAE, Germany, Italy, Japan, Guam, South Korea and the United States. In 2012, USO Centers were visited more than 8.8 million times by troops and their families. We provide a warm and comforting place where troops and family members can connect with each other via Internet or telephone, play a video game, catch a movie, have a snack or just put their feet up and relax. Currently, the nine USO Centers in Afghanistan collectively average more than 170,000 visits monthly. In May, the USO celebrated the opening of our newest centers located in the airports of Nashville and El Paso. These locations will serve our traveling troops and their families as well as support troops in the greater Nashville and El Paso communities.

## **Deployed Troops**

**USO VOLUNTEERS:** Volunteers are the heart of the USO. They deliver goodness to our troops and their families in our centers and the community at locations around the world. In a recent survey, 80% of USO volunteers polled cited “interaction with troops and their families” as their greatest reward. In April, the USO joined nonprofits nationwide to celebrate and recognize the time and talents of volunteers during National Volunteer Week. The USO is honored to have more than 27,000 volunteers across the globe who gave more than 1.35 million hours last year in service of troops and families.

**USO2GO:** Designed to send much needed electronic gaming, sports/musical equipment, and personal care items to troops in remote locations, USO2GO was launched in 2008 to ensure those in the field have some of the small comforts of home. USO2GO deployed bundles, weighing nearly one ton each, have been delivered to more than 600 remote forward operating bases in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Philippines, Egypt, Djibouti and Kuwait. In 2012 the USO celebrated the shipment of our 1,000<sup>th</sup> USO2GO bundle; that’s 2 million pounds of goodness sent directly to troops who need us most. USO2GO continues to be the most requested program directly from the field to support our deployed troops. Recently, National Guard units out of Hawaii and Army units from Fort Sill, OK and Fort Bliss, TX, deployed to remote locations in the Middle East, received the USO2GO bundles they requested to help them relax and recharge.

**MOBILE USO:** USO centers on wheels, Mobiles offer troops the same kind of great support that USO provides in an airport or installation location. These large mobile centers travel to big events and military exercises to provide a place for men and women in uniform to relax during downtime, provide USO service to areas without a USO Center, and support our centers and the community in times of crisis. Each Mobile USO offers the troops laptops, large screen televisions, video game consoles, Wi-Fi access, casual seating, refrigerators, coffee makers and microwaves. Following Hurricane Sandy, USO staff from USO centers in North Carolina and Dover, Delaware, and the USO regional office in Norfolk, Virginia deployed vehicles to the Floyd Bennett Field tent city in Brooklyn, New York to support the troops assisting the recovery efforts. Two Mobile USO Canteens and two passenger vans stocked with snacks, water and hygienic items created the Mobile USO Convoy beginning on November 5. The Mobile USO provided onsite support including heat, video games, movies and free Wi-Fi to keep the troops connected to loved ones back home. The Mobile USO will be onsite to support wounded warrior athletes and military families at the 2013 Warrior Games in Colorado Springs, Colorado; as well cyclists competing in Ride2Recovery challenges in Texas and Washington DC.

**MEGS:** Packaged in small, ruggedized containers, our Mobile Entertainment Gaming System (MEGS) provides entertainment options to troops in remote locations. Within minutes of opening a MEGS box, troops are watching a movie or playing a video game. A tent is quickly transformed into a movie theater or game room – allowing those in harm's way a chance to relax and recharge. This year the USO introduced a new MEGS Light – a smaller, more compact version of the MEGS, ready for distribution to some of the most remote corners of the world. In 2012, a total of 59 MEGS were distributed to troops throughout the world including many locations in Southwest Asia, Africa, the Philippines and Guam-supporting more than 13,000 troops.

**OPERATION USO CARE PACKAGE:** There is nothing like receiving a care package when deployed in a faraway place. And it's not just the benefit of the goodies that are in the USO care package that makes a difference. Even more significant is the connection to volunteers back home who committed their time and energy to put the packages together. Since 2003, the USO has distributed more than 2.3 million care packages to troops around the world – giving the troops the comforts of home and sending a strong message of support from the citizens they serve. On 9/11 last year, 70 members of Congress gathered on Capitol Hill to assemble 2,000 care packages for troops serving overseas. The next care package event is scheduled on May 22, 2013 on Capitol Hill.

**HOLIDAY BOX:** The USO brings a touch of home to troops stationed overseas with the Holiday Box program. Over the winter holidays, the USO distributed more than 150 holiday boxes to bring a touch of home to troops with the spirit of the season and help them ring in the New Year. And just recently, troops reaching as far as Antarctica received our spring holiday box which included items to celebrate Super Bowl Sunday, Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day. Packages include decorations, snacks, DVDs and games.

**PRO VS. GI JOE:** In partnership with the nonprofit organization Pro vs. GI Joe, deployed troops compete against professional athletes in intense video game competitions. Family and friends of the participating service member are asked to join the professional athletes stateside to meet the pros, watch their loved ones compete, and talk with them via webcam. The impact of Pro vs. GI Joe events is felt on both sides-families have the opportunity to connect and troops are provided a break from life in a war zone. 18 Pro vs. GI Joe events were held in 2012 and in February the team was on hand for the Marine Corps Trials in San Diego, Ca. as athletes vied for an opportunity to compete at the 2013 Warrior Games.

**ENTERTAINMENT ACTIVITIES:** The USO is probably best known for entertainment tours that bring celebrities and performers who donate their time and talents to visit our troops and families wherever they serve. As of March 2013 the USO deployed 41 celebrity entertainers on 19 tours to 18 countries and 3 states, entertaining 42,037 troops and military families. Six of these tours were to a combat zone. Entertainers who recently participated in morale boosting USO tours include Brantley Gilbert, cast members of "Sons of Anarchy", "Clone Wars" and the video game "Call of Duty: Black Ops 2", NFL Players Champ Bailey and JJ Watt, MLB pitchers Randy Johnson and Curt Schilling, NASCAR drivers Ricky Stenhouse Jr. and Daniel Suarez, an advance screening of "A Good Day to Die Hard" with appearances by actor Jai Courtney and director John Moore and Denver Broncos QB Peyton Manning, who accompanied Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Winnefeld on his 2nd USO Spring Troop visit along with the Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders on their 76th USO Tour.

## Military Families

**OPERATION PHONE HOME®:** Operation Phone Home® is one of the most frequently requested services from our forward deployed troops. At our centers located in combat zones, the USO provides a private phone network for troops to make free phone calls home, access to computers with free high speed Internet bandwidth to connect online, with friends and family, as well as free wireless Internet access for troops with their own computers. More and more expectant families take advantage of this free Internet access to virtually accompany their wives in the delivery room for the birth of their children. In Southwest Asia alone, connectivity is the number one reason troops visit our centers. Last year, more than 2.9 million calls were placed by deployed troops – that is more than 28 million minutes of free talk time to reconnect with their families. For those forward deployed troops who are serving in remote areas without access to our centers, the USO provides free international prepaid calling cards. To date, the USO has provided nearly 3 million free prepaid international calling cards, allowing troops stationed overseas to connect with their loved ones back home. In other places around the world, many USO Centers also offer free Internet and free phone calls.

**WITH YOU ALL THE WAY:** USO partners with The Trevor Romain Company and the Comfort Crew for Military Kids (CCMK) to promote self confidence and resiliency in military children six to 18 years old. Military families tell us about the power and impact Trevor has in helping military children tackle bullying in schools, adjust to life during and post-deployment, and coping when a parent makes the ultimate sacrifice. Using innovative, inspiring and humorous stories, Trevor has spoken with thousands of children about the difficulties military kids face during his many USO tours. In 2012, Trevor and his crew embarked on a multi-city international *With You All the Way* tour with presentations to thousands of military children living throughout the Pacific and European regions. This year he will deliver his messages of hope and support to military children stateside with presentations scheduled in Southern California and Washington State throughout the months of April and May. Romain kicked off the Month of the Military Child at Fort Belvoir in Virginia with a presentation to military families and the *With You All the Way* Symposium Series raising awareness for our nation's military children and the unique challenges they face. As a complement to his USO tours, Trevor has created a series of helpful kits that include DVDs, journals, resource books and other elements to help families cope with deployment, reintegration and what happens when a parent returns home with wounds, both seen and unseen. These deployment and Taking Care of You kits are distributed following every performance and also available through our USO Centers around the globe.

Trevor also lends his time to speak with military parents at USO events such as the USO Caregivers Conferences supporting spouses and caregivers who care for a wounded, ill or injured soldier. He also participates in USO/TAPS Good Grief Camps and Survivor Seminars supporting military families who have lost a loved one. The Trevor Romain Memory Boxes, delivered to families who have experienced loss, help bring some comfort and understanding to their new lives without Mom or Dad. In a recent survey conducted among active duty military and their dependents, Trevor Romain and the *With You All the Way* program ranked as one of the highest valued programs supporting our nation's military families.

**SESAME STREET/USO EXPERIENCE:** *The Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families* made its debut in July 2008, to help families deal with the challenges of deployment and homecomings. Since its inception, the tour has taken its message to more than 368,000 troops and military families and performed 631 shows on 145 military installations in 33 states and 11 countries. Additionally, the tour logged more than 122,000 miles and distributed more than 2 million giveaways. This year, the *Sesame*

*Street/USO Experience for Military Families* will once again be hitting the road and touring the globe, this time to 42-bases in eight countries.

**THE LITTLE CHAMPS:** Military children move an average of 6-9 times between Kindergarten and 12th grade, usually attending multiple schools during that time. In an effort to support these children and honor the sacrifices they make, the USO supports the book “The Little CHAMPS: Child Heroes Attached to Military Personnel” by mother-daughter authors Debbie and Jennifer Fink. The five “CHAMPS” endure issues common to life as a military child from deployment to when a parent returns home wounded. The book concludes with lyrics for “The Little CHAMPS” song reminding children that “goodbyes are not forever.” In 2012, the USO provided copies of the book to USO Centers around the globe and brought the authors to military installations to perform the song and talk about the book’s themes with children and educators. In April, the USO and Debbie Fink brought messages of hope and support to military children living in the Pacific with “The Little CHAMPS” tour.

**UNITED THROUGH READING’S MILITARY PROGRAM:** Last year, more than 43,000 recordings were mailed to military families worldwide. One of the most powerful things we can do is connect a deployed parent with their children back home. In 2006, the USO partnered with United Through Reading® to host its nationally recognized program at select USO Centers worldwide. Whether troops are stationed at a forward operating base in Afghanistan or deploying overseas, they can visit their participating USO Center to read a story aloud to their child. Mom or Dad’s special story time is recorded on camera, and the USO mails this priceless DVD and book home. Children can watch and listen to their parent at bedtime, naptime or anytime. Families complete the circle by sending back a touch of home – a photo of the child watching their deployed Mom or Dad reading the book. In November, the USO celebrated our 250,000<sup>th</sup> recording with a *Read Around the World* event encompassing dozens of USO Centers and hundreds of United Through Reading recordings shipped to families around the globe. View the *Read Around the World* video at: <http://tinyurl.com/bmoqysj>.

**USO PHOTO BOOK PROGRAM:** Through a partnership with RocketLife LLC, families upload up to 60 photos and create free personal soft cover photo books small enough to fit in a cargo pocket. These 20-page albums are sent to the deployed troops, keeping them connected to their loved ones back home. In a recent USO survey of active duty military and their families, the USO Photo Book program was rated as one of the most highly valued programs supporting our nation’s military families. Families noted the convenience and portability of the book made it an easy way to stay connected when separated by deployment.

**‘JOINING FORCES’:** The USO partners with the White House *Joining Forces* initiative to strengthen military families around the world. *Joining Forces* focuses on three key issues facing military families – education, employment and wellness. Last year, the USO worked with First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden on two events supporting our military families. In May, they hosted Congressional spouses to create Mother’s Day gift boxes with the USO and nonprofit Full Circle Home. These gifts were filled with pampering products, gift cards and most importantly, a love note from their deployed troop. The USO shipped the boxes in time to surprise the women on Mother’s Day. In June, Dr. Jill Biden introduced her new children's book "Don't Forget, God Bless Our Troops" to military families of the DC National Guard at a USO book reading. The book, which was inspired by Dr. Biden's granddaughter Natalie's personal deployment experience, offers coping mechanisms, ideas on how to stay connected through lengthy deployments and lets military kids know that they are not alone. The USO supports the annual *Salute to the Military USO Concert* on July 4<sup>th</sup> hosted by President and Mrs. Obama featuring major performing artists who perform for military families on the South Lawn of the White House. The event includes a picnic and festive games, serving as a tribute to America's military families.

## **USO Warrior and Family Care™ *Healing with Honor***

The USO is in a unique position to lead a first-class network of support for our wounded, ill and injured troops, their families and caregivers, as well as the families of the fallen. The USO developed USO Warrior and Family Care, which is comprehensive, long-term programming that supports these groups, building the hope and confidence of each family member while helping them sustain their journey towards a full and rewarding life. We want to keep these families together and strong. We also want these men and women to have plans for the future and an active support networks in place, them the best chance to heal with honor.

Immediately following 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, just as it has since its inception in 1941. Through local community support, celebrity visits, field trips, concerts, dinners, and other high impact events, USO staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly to ensure that all who have served and sacrificed know just how much America appreciates their extraordinary sacrifice. 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 Warrior Center supporting Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, and USO San Antonio supporting the Brooke Army Medical Center, focus on important programs and activities designed to combat stress and uncertainty of what the future may hold.

In April 2003, the USO embedded a USO Center in the heart of the Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility (CASF) at Ramstein Air Base, Germany to provide a comforting environment for wounded troops being staged there for transport to the United States following medical treatment at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC). Like the CASF USO, the USO Warrior Center that was built in 2008 at LRMC serves the outpatients being treated there and also provides a place to relax for the wounded held at LRMC until they are cleared to return to their units in Afghanistan. More than 20 events per month at the Warrior Center help these healing troops get a touch of home. Both of these USO Centers are proud to maintain the mission resiliency of hard working medical personnel.

In military hospitals across Afghanistan, USO staff provides some of the most common but significant support to healing heroes in the most remote locations. Ranging from often overlooked items like coffee stirrers and magazines to immediate basic needs like clothing and bed sheets, the USO identifies and fulfills requests on a regular basis. The USO also distributes TVs, video gaming systems, and games to hospitals in Afghanistan. While gaming is a leisure activity, research shows that some video games make excellent therapy sessions and help our healing heroes regain cognitive function and focus. In addition, the USO provides puzzles and Lego figures for Traumatic Brain Injury clinics to assist in their healing therapy.

In some cases, military commands worldwide will call upon the USO to provide health and welfare support for their recovering wounded. By answering those requests with USO Warrior and Family Care Day Rooms, we fulfill that need. Generally, 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 USO facility is not an option. The USO supports more than 40 Day Rooms across the globe including many locations in theater.

USO's support of wounded, ill and injured troops, their families and caregivers encompasses many critical facets of life, including physical and recreational activities, behavioral health, family strengthening, education and employment transition, and community reintegration support. USO Warrior and Family Care collaborates with numerous organizations that we have deemed best-in-class to serve the needs of these troops and families.

In 2011, we launched a series of Public Service Announcements entitled "Portraits" designed to raise awareness for the impact of invisible wounds of war – Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). "Portraits" is a documentary-style PSA that features troops who proudly answered the call to duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, and who now live with invisible wounds. These stories and more can be viewed at [www.USOInvisibleWounds.org](http://www.USOInvisibleWounds.org).

**USO WARRIOR AND FAMILY CENTERS:** The USO has made significant progress in the construction of our two new USO Warrior and Family Centers. On February 5<sup>th</sup> of this year 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, their families and 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 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/HIRE HEROES USA TRANSITION WORKSHOPS AND CAREER OPPORTUNITY DAYS:** The USO, in collaboration with Hire Heroes USA, hosts career transitions workshops for wounded, ill and injured troops, their spouses and caregivers. The workshops focus on resume writing, mock interviews, professional work practices and translating prior military experience into a civilian career. As a follow up to the workshops, the USO, in works with Hire Heroes USA to host Career Opportunity Days for wounded, ill and injured troops, spouses and caregivers. These non-traditional career transition events connect employers with participants based on interest and background. Employers are pre-matched to conduct practice interviews and provide feedback to these men and women who, in many cases, have never participated in a civilian interview. Career Opportunity Days are limited to 10-15 employers and 40-60 wounded, ill and injured transitioning troops and veterans, as well as their spouses and caregivers, to ensure these events provide an environment conducive to one-on-one interaction and networking. In 2013, the USO plans to support 67 workshops and 18 Career Opportunity Days expanding to more than two dozen locations. The USO will also pilot the delivery of these events to non-wounded troops and families transitioning to the civilian workforce.

**USO CAREGIVERS CONFERENCES:** Caregivers Conferences provide *caregivers* (husbands, wives, parents, hospital staff and other family members 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 U.S. 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. One additional conference will be held in 2013.

**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 that 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.

**STRONGER FAMILIES OXYGEN SEMINARS:** The USO works with Stronger Families to bring the Oxygen Seminar to military couples to help them strengthen their relationship while 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, USO will collaborate with the Army Warrior Transition Command's Chaplain Corps to deliver the program to Warrior Transition Units across the nation.

**PROJECT SANCTUARY:** Active duty, veteran and wounded warrior families participate in six-day therapeutic retreat in the mountains of Colorado. The focus is always 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 mental needs.

**FAMILY STRENGTHENING CAMPS:** Partnerships 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. The camps offer specific programming uniquely geared to the challenges our military families face. For example, camps create opportunities for children to meet other children whose parents have sustained a wound, illness or injury. Families leave these events with the tools they need to help them adapt to challenges and keep their families strong and together.

**USO/SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY'S INSTITUTE FOR VETERANS AND MILITARY'S OPERATION JUMPSTART WORKSHOPS:** Entrepreneurship and small business ownership is a key opportunity for wounded, ill and injured service members, their families and caregivers. Troops and their families are natural entrepreneurs, possessing the skills, experience and leadership to start businesses and shape their future. With Operation Jumpstart, the USO is supporting training in entrepreneurship to wounded ill and injured troops, their spouses and caregivers. After the two-day workshop, participants will have created a Feasibility Analysis Deliverable that will serve as the basis for future business planning efforts. It is designed to assist them in developing an 'actionable' plan for subsequent efforts focused on launching a new venture. Following their participation, attendees will have the opportunity to apply to attend the nine-day Entrepreneurship Bootcamp for Veterans program hosted at various universities across the United States. This is a natural extension to the exposure these troops receive to starting their own businesses during the two-day workshop.

**USO/ASPENPOINTE PEER NAVIGATOR PROGRAM:** The USO works with AspenPointe, one of the largest nonprofits based in Colorado serving individuals and families. They focus on behavioral health issues, substance abuse, employment, career development, education, housing, jail diversion/reintegration, telephonic wellness and provider network services. The AspenPointe Peer Navigator Program seeks to serve wounded, ill and injured troops, as well as active duty troops embarking on the transition to civilian sector.



Through a full time - navigator whose connection to the military provide them with similar experiences, the program works to help the integration process be less stressful and much smoother- providing that much needed “concierge” type service to these men and women as they to navigate the winding road of transition. The USO works to identify healing heroes, as well as active duty troops at Ft Carson, CO and assists them and their families to connect with AspenPointe and community resources.

**RENOVATINGHOPE:** The USO recently launched a new program in partnership with the nonprofit organization RenovatingHope. Through this collaboration, the USO supports recently discharged wounded, ill and injured troops 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, living in conditions that are severe, financial strain and family despair, are physically unable to make the repairs themselves, and/or do not have sufficient income to hire qualified contractors to complete the work.

**RIDE2RECOVERY:** 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 physical challenge might be, Ride 2 Recovery participants conquer their fears and prove they are a warrior even away from the battlefield. The USO partners with Ride 2 Recovery, providing bicycles for participants, as well as adaptive bicycles and support for Project Hero- a cycling training group based at various hospital and transition facilities 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.

**WARRIOR GAMES:** This May, the USO will proudly support the 4th annual Warrior Games held in Colorado Springs, Colorado. More than 200 wounded, ill and injured servicemen and women from all branches will compete in Olympic-style events such as archery, cycling, wheelchair basketball, shooting, swimming, track & field and seated volleyball. The USO also supports the families who make their way to Colorado to cheer on their loved ones.

**FAMILIES OF THE FALLEN:** The USO has supported every dignified transfer at Dover Air Force Base since March 1991. 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. Additionally, as family notifications occur at all times of the day and night, the USO works 24/7 to coordinate among USO Centers across the country to support and comfort families traveling to and from Dover, meeting the myriad needs of families who have just received tragic news. In 2012, the USO was there for more than 3,000 family members, attending 310 dignified transfers at Dover last year. 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), The Moyer Foundation 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.

## **Providing the resources for USO programs and services**

**BARBECUE FOR THE TROOPS:** “Barbecue for the Troops”, a new USO fundraising program designed to rally individuals and organizations across the country to give back to our troops and their families through backyard barbecues and block parties, launched in April 2013. From Memorial Day through Labor Day weekend, communities and individuals nationwide will be encouraged to host a barbecue or block party and then donate funds raised at the event to the USO, to support troops and families. To register call 1-855-4USO-BBQ or visit [Barbecue for the Troops](#).

**OPERATION ENDURING CARE:** The USO launched Operation Enduring Care, a major fundraising effort, to support America’s healing heroes and their families and our families of the fallen. This campaign is the USO’s largest commitment in its history and will deliver the resources needed to support our healing heroes, their families and caregivers through their recovery process. The funds will be used to build two new, innovative Warrior and Family Centers, deliver vital programs and ensure that these facilities continue providing the critical support for our healing heroes, their families and caregivers.

**USO WISHBOOK:** Found at [USOWISHBOOK.org](#), USO Wishbook is a comprehensive catalog featuring dozens of virtual gifts that support troops and their families. USO Wishbook provides Americans a unique away to give a gift that gives twice – once to a friend or family member and then again to those who need us most: deployed troops, wounded ill and injured troops and their caregivers and families of the fallen. Throughout the year, gifts are added in honor of special gift giving occasions and as USO programs and services expand. Recently, Americans were given new opportunities to give back to our nation’s wounded warriors and their families, with the inclusion of gifts like “Flight Home Comfort Kit” and “Writing the Right Resume.” To date, more than 34,000 gifts have been purchased. The most popular gifts are “Phone Calls Home,” “Comfort Food Package” “Deployment Kit” and “Long Distance Bedtime Stories.”

USO meets all 20 Better Business Bureau Standards for Charity Accountability.

**To learn more about the USO and how we serve our troops and their families, visit us at:**

**[uso.org](#)   [Blog.uso.org](#)   [Facebook.com/TheUSO](#)   [Twitter.com/The\\_USO](#)  
[flickr.com/photos/theuso](#)**