



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chris Draft, Donnie Edwards, Eric Metcalf and Bill Polian Celebrate America's Troops on USO/NFL Tour Downrange

Twitter Pitch: Troops turn out for @the_USO/@NFL tour to Middle East featuring Draft, Edwards, Metcalf and Polian!

Arlington, VA (July 2, 2013) – Football greats **Chris Draft, Donnie Edwards, Eric Metcalf** and **Bill Polian**, have sprung into action – visiting, uplifting and celebrating troops stationed in the Middle East as part of a week-long [USO/Armed Forces Entertainment](#) tour. Continuing a time honored USO/NFL tradition of sending celebrated sports figures overseas to spend quality time with troops, the group is delivering America's thanks by volunteering with USO and spending quality time with troops.

DETAILS:

- Among some of the work sites the group is scheduled to visit are a fire station, the Explosive Ordnance Division and a Military K-9 Unit, where the group will learn vital life saving techniques, try on protective armor and participate in live-action demonstrations.
- This trip marks the fifth USO tour for Edwards, who has uplifted the spirits of 4,415 troops and military families, and traveled to seven countries since 2007. The tour is the first for Draft, Metcalf and Polian, and commemorates the NFL's 48th year of working with the USO.
- Among those who have participated in USO/NFL tours last year are **Jason Baker** (Free Agent), **Dhani Jones** (11-year NFL veteran/Travel Channel host), **Alex Mack** (Cleveland Browns), **Takeo Spikes** (Free Agent), **Eric Winston** (Free Agent), **Bill Cowher** (former Pittsburgh Steelers head coach); **Leslie Frazier** (Minnesota Vikings head coach); **Ben Kotwica** (New York Jets assistant special teams coach/U.S. Army veteran); and **Eric Mangini** (Senior Offensive Consultant, San Francisco 49ers).

- In 1966, the NFL teamed up with the USO and became the first sports organization to send a group of players to Vietnam and other parts of Asia to demonstrate the league's support for America's troops.
- In 1998, Draft graduated from Stanford University and went on to play professional football for twelve consecutive years. A former NFL linebacker, Draft played for the Chicago Bears, San Francisco 49ers, Atlanta Falcons, Carolina Panthers, St. Louis Rams, Buffalo Bills and Washington Redskins. In 2006, he founded the Chris Draft Family Foundation (CDFF), a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering families to live healthy lifestyles.
- A graduate of the University of California Los Angeles, Edwards was drafted by the Kansas City Chiefs in fourth round of the 1996 NFL Draft. A former linebacker, he also played for the San Diego Chargers and made it to the Pro Bowl in 2002.
- A University of Texas at Austin alum, Metcalf is a former NFL running back and wide receiver for the Cleveland Browns, Atlanta Falcons, San Diego Chargers, Arizona Cardinals, Washington Redskins and Green Bay Packers. Named NFL's second All-Time Punt Return Touchdown Leader, Metcalf is also a three-time Pro Bowl selection.
- Former Vice Chairman of the Indianapolis Colts from 1998-2011, Polian rose to NFL prominence as the General Manager of the Buffalo Bills, where he helped build a team that played in four consecutive Super Bowls. Following his stint with the Bills, he went on to become the General Manager for the Carolina Panthers. In his 24 seasons with Colts, Panthers and Bills, Polian's teams made the playoffs 17 times, reached eight championship games and played in five Super Bowls. Tapping into his gridiron expertise, Polian joined ESPN as an NFL analyst in March 2012.

QUOTES:

Attributed to Chris Draft:

"My father was in the Marine Corps, my brother was in the Navy and my grandfather was career Army, so military values have shaped my life. It is an honor and a privilege to be able to visit our troops abroad and thank them for their commitment and sacrifices that benefit all Americans."

Attributed to Donnie Edwards:

"If it weren't for our Armed Forces, I wouldn't know what it was like to have the freedom to vote, much less play football professionally. We, as Americans, owe them our respect and our time. And one of the many ways I honor them is by working with the USO and going out on tours to convey my appreciation."

Attributed to Eric Metcalf:

"People watch the game of football and believe it must be tough to get out there and put your body on the line every play. I chose to be a part of this tour because our troops are the real men and women putting their lives on the line for our entire country. These brave Americans allow us to sleep comfortably every night and being a part of this tour is the only way that I can begin to

repay them. I have been on many football teams throughout my life but I am about to experience a few days with the ultimate team and at the same time celebrate the 4th of July with the men and women who keep us free. It gets no better than this!"

Attributed to Bill Polian:

"I am honored to be part of this great trip. I can't imagine a better place to be on July 4th than with our troops overseas."

MULTIMEDIA:

USO Fact Sheet: <http://bit.ly/Y3YoUi>

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 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.

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