

**USO Puget Sound Area 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala and Auction Raises \$300,000 in Support of Northwest Military Personnel and Their Families**

*Star-studded celebration brings together Major League Baseball Pitcher Jamie Moyer, Military Service Members of the Year and the legendary Bob Hope to honor our local military heroes*

SEATTLE, WA – November 21, 2011 – USO Puget Sound Area (USOPSA) today announced that the 2011 Five-Star Gala and Auction, held November 17 at the Museum of Flight, raised nearly \$300,000 in support of local military personnel and their families.

Funds will help USOPSA provide a range of free programs and services to more than 500,000 local and traveling military annually, including an ongoing partnership with The Moyer Foundation and TAPS to offer Camp Erin ‘Good Grief’ bereavement summer camps to children who have lost a parent or other loved one in military service.

Funds will also help support USOPSA centers at Sea-Tac Airport and Joint Base Lewis-McChord, the USOPSA Mobile Canteen and programs such as United Through Reading, which allows deploying service members to record and send home books and video of themselves reading books to children and family back home.

“USOPSA provides a vital support system for our local military community, and a direct connection for businesses, civic organizations and others to join the USO family and help support our military,” said Malcolm McLellan, USOPSA Board Chairman and Partner with Van Ness Feldman PC. “We would like to thank all of our sponsors for making this year’s Gala such a success.”

The USOPSA 2011 Gala and Auction included a pre-Gala VIP event and meet and greet with Gala Celebrity Co-Chairs MLB Pitcher Jamie Moyer and Karen Moyer of The Moyer Foundation, a silent and live auction, and entertainment from renowned Bob Hope impersonator Bill Johnson.

The highlight of the evening was the announcement that USOPSA is renaming the USO center at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, the “Shali Center,” in honor of USOPSA Board Member and Civic Leader Joan Shalikashvili, and her late husband, U.S. Army Gen. John Shalikashvili, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. A plaque was unveiled that will remain on permanent display at the JBLM USO center.

“The Shalikashvili family have built their lives around service to this great nation and enriching the lives of our local military heroes,” said Don Leingang, USOPSA Executive Director and Commander, USN (Ret.) “It is only fitting that the USO center at the heart of our Northwest operations, bear the name of one of this nation’s great patriotic families and a true American hero.”

USOPSA also honored the USOPSA Volunteer of the Year 2012, Kirkland-resident David Tennent, and the Puget Sound Military Service Members of the Year: 'Soldier of the Year 2011' U.S. Army Sergeant Steven Capen, 62<sup>nd</sup> Medical Brigade; 'Marine of the Year' 2011' USMC Sergeant Stephen Bare, 4<sup>th</sup> Landing Support Battalion, 4<sup>th</sup> Marine Logistics Group; 'Sailor of the Year' 2011 U.S. Navy Yeoman Second Class Gricel Rodriguez, Navy Region Northwest; 'Enlisted Person of the Year' 2011 USCG Yeoman Third Class Leslie Byerly, District 13; and 'Airman of the Year' 2011 USAF Senior Airman Jesse Hughes, 62<sup>nd</sup> Air Wing.

The USOPSA would like to acknowledge the generosity of all of this year's Gala sponsors and attendees, including The Boeing Company, Merrill Gardens, Pinnacle Family of Companies, TriWest Healthcare Alliance and Walmart.

To schedule interviews (press only), please contact:

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### **About USO Puget Sound Area**

For 45 years, the USO Puget Sound Area has provided 'all the comforts of home' to our brave military personnel and their families, via the USOPSA centers at Sea-Tac Airport and Joint Base Lewis-McChord, the USO Mobile Canteen, special events, and deployments and homecomings at military installations throughout the Puget Sound region. The USO Puget Sound Area is a private, non-profit organization, and a chartered center of USO Headquarters in Washington, D.C., not a government agency. We rely on the generosity of our "Army of Gratitude" volunteers and donors. We are also supported through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC-15348).

For more information on USOPSA, to view pictures from this year's Gala, and to make a tax-deductible contribution to USOPSA, visit us online at: [www.usopsa.org](http://www.usopsa.org). Show your support for our military and follow @USOPSA on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

