



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **USO Puget Sound Readies Disneyland Send-Off for Children of Fallen Heroes Joins American Airlines at Sea-Tac for Area's First Snowball Express**

Seattle – The USO Puget Sound Area (USOPSA) will join American Airlines and the Snowball Express to provide a festive send-off to Disneyland, complete with Santa Claus, for children and families from the Puget Sound area whom have lost a parent serving in the U.S. Armed Forces in Afghanistan or Iraq. The Disneyland send-off is scheduled for Tuesday, 7:00 AM, Dec. 16, Gate A9, at Sea-Tac Airport.

The Snowball Express provides all-expense paid Disneyland vacations during the holidays. This is the first time children from the Puget Sound area have joined the Snowball Express. On Dec. 16, 25 children, ages 4 to 16, with family members, will depart from Sea-Tac and join 2000 children nationwide in Disneyland and other adventure stops in Southern California.

“Our mission is about showing true gratitude. These are the children of service members whom have given their lives, and made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces,” says Don Leingang, USOPSA executive director, “We commend American Airlines for their support of this program and for giving us the opportunity to express our gratitude to these families.”

The program, sponsored by American Airlines, began after the 9/11 attacks as an act of gratitude to the nation's military families and to support the children of our fallen heroes. Numerous USO volunteers will escort families through security and provide special decorations, gift bags, and festivities at the departure gate. Logistics for Santa's arrival have been worked out with the North Pole.

### **MEDIA LOGISTICS: Gate A9, American Airlines, Sea-Tac Airport**

To obtain a pass, go to the AA ticket counter and ask for a 9100 pass for Snowball express. Proceed to Special Security Gate 10 (this has been designated just for the Snowball Express event). Regular camera equipment will be fine at the security gate. For larger cameras, please contact Terri-Ann Betancourt, Public Affairs, at the Port of Seattle, to make special arrangements, 206-248-7494 and email is [betancourt.t@portseattle.org](mailto:betancourt.t@portseattle.org).

### **Did you know?**

- Over **300,000 military members** and their families live and work in the Puget Sound area
- USOPSA served over **154,00** people in 2007
- The USO is a community-based nonprofit and takes **NO** money from the federal government
- **Over 275 volunteers, giving 27,000 hours** a year, provide USOPSA services and support
- Military families travel around the clock and the Sea-Tac USO Center is open with the "comforts of home" 24/7
- Deploying soldiers at McChord AFB always see a USO volunteer offering them a care package and support

For more background on the work of the USOPSA or the American Airlines program go to

[www.snowballexpress.org](http://www.snowballexpress.org)

[www.usopsa.org](http://www.usopsa.org)