



**USO Gala Raises Record-Setting \$500,000 in Support of Northwest Military**  
*USO Puget Sound Area (USOPSA) marks most successful fundraiser in organization's 46-year history*

**SEATTLE – September 24, 2012** – USO Puget Sound Area's annual Five-Star Gala & Auction, held Saturday, September 22 at The Westin Bellevue, raised approximately \$500,000, making the event the most successful fundraiser in the organization's 46-year history. Funds will support USO operations throughout the Northwest in Q4 of 2012 and 2013.

"Our generous sponsors care deeply about our military and their families," said Donald Leingang, executive director of USO Puget Sound Area and CDR, USN (Ret.). "We owe the success of this year's event to sponsors such as America's Credit Union, Boeing, Brown Bear Car Wash, Carol and Spike Anderson, Kemper Development, Merrill Gardens, Pinnacle Family of Companies, Talbot Financial, TriWest Healthcare Alliance, U.S. Bank, Walmart and many more."

Funds raised help USOPSA provide free morale, welfare and recreation services to more than 537,000 local and traveling military annually via USO centers at Sea-Tac Airport, Joint Base Lewis-McChord and the USO Mobile Canteen RV, which delivers USO hospitality to military installations and events across the Northwest.

The USO welcomed more than 400 attendees, including our region's Military Service Members of the Year, active-duty military and veterans from all five service branches; USO Board members, staff and volunteers, sponsors, and media including Bonneville International, Clear Channel Communications and Swarner Communications.

"The need for USO services here in the Northwest has never been greater," said Malcolm McLellan, USOPSA Board Chairman and Partner with Van Ness Feldman PC. "Thanks to the continued support of our generous sponsors, we can look forward to expanding services in 2013 and beyond."

The USOPSA 2012 Gala and Auction included a pre-Gala VIP event hosted by USO sponsors Carol and Spike Anderson, a silent and live auction, and a special Raise the Paddle video and appearance by Staff Sergeant Jordan Bressler, U.S. Army (Ret.) of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment. The video documented Staff Sergeant Bressler's combat injuries and participation in the USO-sponsored Ride2Recovery, which supports cycling programs across the U.S. for injured veterans.

The USO salutes our Puget Sound Military Service Members of the Year: U.S. Army Specialist Andrew Lester, 520<sup>th</sup> Medical Company, 1 Corps Non Commissioned

Officer of the Year; USMC Sergeant Kurt Chmielewski, 4<sup>th</sup> Landing Support Battalion, 4<sup>th</sup> Marine Logistics Group, Marine of the Year; Engineman First Class Wade Houston, Navy Region Northwest, Sailor of the Year; Senior Airman Raegan Griffith, U.S. Air Force Airman of the Year; USCG Health Services Technician First Class Jayme Reed, Coast Guard District 13, Enlisted Person of the Year.

This year's Gala committee was led by Co-Chairs Margaret Talbot, professional business woman and member of the USO Puget Sound Area Board of Directors, and Randy Talbot, managing director at Talbot Financial. A special thanks to Betty and Kemper Freeman for serving as this year's Honorary Gala Co-Chairs, and to David Boze, host of The David Boze Show on KTTH 770 AM: The Truth, for presenting the evening's live auction items.

To schedule interviews (press only), please contact:

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

For 71 years, the USO has lifted the spirits of America's military and their families. USO Puget Sound Area continues that tradition today by serving more than 537,000 active-duty military, dependents and veterans annually, via USO centers at Sea-Tac Airport and Joint Base Lewis-McChord; and the USO Mobile Canteen RV, which delivers USO hospitality to military and civilian events across the Pacific Northwest. USO Puget Sound Area is a private, non-profit organization and a chartered center of USO Headquarters in Arlington, VA, not a government agency. We rely on the generosity of our volunteers and donors. We are also supported through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC-15348).

For more information, or 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](#).