



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contact:

Nate Murphy
Kitsap Public Relations
(206) 618-2790
nate@kitsap-pr.com

USO Begins Largest Northwest Expansion Since World War II with Remodel and Dedication of 'Shali' Center at Joint Base Lewis-McChord

Seattle, WA. (November 7, 2012) – USO Northwest (*formerly USO Council of the Puget Sound Area*) today announced the largest Northwest expansion of USO services since World War II. USO Northwest has expanded beyond the Puget Sound Area to support active-duty military and their families throughout Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska.

“This expansion represents a monumental undertaking, and the level of support we are able to offer in these new territories will depend greatly on our ability to rally public support and sponsors,” said Donald Leingang, executive director of USO Northwest and CDR, USN (Ret.). “Our military heroes and their families deserve our respect and support, and USO will be there when and where they need us most.”

USO Northwest will offer some of our most popular programs in time for the holidays. Two of the first programs to launch throughout the region will be Helping Hands Grants, which provide access to funds for special events and holiday activities, and United Through Reading, which connects deployed military with their children back home. The deployed parent is recorded reading a book via DVD. The USO sends the video and book home allowing the parent and child to make powerful and lasting connections from afar.

The expansion begins on Thursday, November 8, 10:00 – 10:30 a.m. with a ribbon-cutting ceremony reopening USO Northwest’s remodeled center at Joint-Base Lewis McChord and dedication as the ‘Shali’ center in honor of Joan Shalikashvili, USO Northwest board member and volunteer, and her husband, the late Gen. John Shalikashvili, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs under President Clinton.

The Shali center includes a completely remodeled commercial grade kitchen, dining room, bathrooms, flooring, countertops, and many other upgrades improving the available workspace, flow of foot traffic and seating throughout the center. USO Northwest added five flat-screen TVs and a new gaming lounge complete with a large sectional couch, leather living room chairs, and Xbox 360 Entertainment Systems with Kinect.

The Shali center provides meals, entertainment and a relaxing environment for more than 50,000 deploying service members annually. USO Northwest contracted with SkB Architects to design the new center and PCL Construction to bring the design to life.

“The Shalikashvili family and USO share a deep and abiding respect for the dedication, service and sacrifice of our military and their families,” said Malcolm McLellan, USO Northwest board chairman and partner with Van Ness Feldman LLP. “The unwavering support USO Northwest receives from our communities makes this expansion possible.”

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About USO Northwest

The USO (United Service Organizations) lifts the spirits of America’s troops and their families millions of times each year at hundreds of places worldwide. USO Northwest continues that tradition by serving more than 530,000 active-duty military and their families annually throughout Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington State. We provide a touch of home through our centers at Sea-Tac International Airport and Joint Base Lewis-McChord, our USO Mobile Canteen RV, and innovative programs and services. We also provide critical support to those who need us most, including military deploying overseas and arriving home, military families, wounded warriors and their families, and the families of the fallen.

USO Northwest is a private, nonprofit organization, not a government agency. We rely on the generosity of our volunteers and donors. In addition to individual donors and corporate sponsors, USO Northwest is also supported through the United Way and Combined Federal Campaign (CFC-15348). To join us in this patriotic mission, and to learn more about USO Northwest, please visit usonw.org.