

## **2008 Military Spouse of the Year Awards Ceremony**

**Washington, D.C.-May 6, 2008**

Senior officials and spouses gather to honor this year's spouse of the year.

By MSM

In 1984 President Reagan proclaimed the Friday before Mother's Day of each year to be Military Spouse Appreciation Day in recognition of the "countless personal sacrifices" military spouses have made in support of the Armed Forces. This year, MSAD is this Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

Tuesday, the veteran-owned Victory Media, Inc. hosted Military Spouse magazine's Military Spouse of the Year Luncheon Honoring Chelle Brewer, 2008 Military Spouse of the Year (MSOY) at Washington, D.C.'s Ronald Reagan Building. Chelle was selected as this year's winner from a competitive field of candidates representing spouses of all US Armed Forces.

Representing this year's MSOY sponsor, TriWest Healthcare Alliance, was CEO Mr. David McIntyre. McIntyre presented the MSOY charity recipient, Thanks USA, with a \$5000.00 check to provide educational support for military families. "ThanksUSA is a great charity. They provide scholarships to spouses and children of our men and women in uniform," McIntyre said of the organization. ThanksUSA was started by sisters, Rachel and Kelsi Okun, whose father, Bob Okun was on hand to accept the award on behalf of the charity. "I am thrilled to represent ThanksUSA", said the proud father about the award.

Mistress of ceremonies and co-founder of Military Spouse magazine, Babette Maxwell, opened the luncheon with remarks about the pioneering award for spouse. "This is an award that has been a long time in coming. A national award and platform for military spouses is truly an indicated of changing times," Maxwell said. "We are thrilled with support we've received from The White House and spouses of senior leadership who have made this award the flagship award for military spouses."

The First Lady Laura Bush attended via recorded message to the MSOY and the community, taking time out her schedule to recognize spouses at the event, "Chelle was first recognized for her work with Soldier's List. It is the president's and my honor to recognize her here today as Military Spouse magazine's 2008 Military Spouse of the Year."

Also speaking at the luncheon and award ceremony were Co-Chairs, Mrs. Sheila Casey, spouse of the Chief of Staff of the United States Army and Mrs. Karen Preston, spouse of the Sergeant Major of the United States Army. "Chelle is an amazing woman," Casey said, "and exemplifies the spouses in America who must juggle work and home life." Echoing Mrs. Casey's remarks, Mrs. Preston went on to say, "Chelle is truly an inspiration."

About being named this year's Military Spouse of the Year, Brewer said, "This award means so much to all spouses from the World War II spouse to present day military spouses." The Army mother of a special needs child, Brewer is an ambassador family for the American Heart Association, multi-lingual teacher, charity founder, philanthropist and professional singer.