



Jorge Adeler, left, of [Adeler Jewelers](#) in Great Falls, and Bob Okun, right, McLean resident and ThanksUSA president, congratulate Tom Thompson, center, grand prize winner of the first annual ThanksUSA nationwide treasure hunt.

ThanksUSA Presents First Grand Prize Winner

The Grand Prize winner of the first annual ThanksUSA National Treasure Hunt claimed his treasure chest in Washington, DC, Monday, capping off a weekend visit to the nation's Capital.

The Treasure Hunt promotes awareness of Thanks USA's scholarship program, which in its first year doled out \$3.5 million in need-based, post-secondary scholarships to more than 1,000 spouses and children of military members serving on active duty status. Scholarship recipients represented each of the 50 states and the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, National Guard and Reserves.

The Grand Prize winner, Tom Thompson, of Stewart Manor, NY, his wife, and 14-year-old daughter, Kelly, received a one-of-a-kind treasure chest filled with jewelry, gems, representing all 50 states and rare coins valued at \$100,000 and assembled and donated by Mr. Jorge Adeler of Adeler Jeweler of Great Falls, VA. Other contributors to the prize package include the Willard InterContinental Hotel, The Washington Nationals, Northwest Airlines, and LaMay Limousine Service.

Created in 2005 by nine- and eleven-year-old sisters, Rachel and Kelsi Okun, of McLean, Virginia, the nationwide Treasure Hunt signals the beginning of the non-profit's annual

scholarship drive benefiting the families of active-duty status military personnel.

More than 6,000 contestants competed in the 2006 Treasure Hunt. The 2007 Treasure Hunt is underway and it is not too late for contestants to sign up through the ThanksUSA web site. (www.ThanksUSA.org) With over 200 questions related to our “Pillars of Democracy”, the Hunt’s 2007 Clue Book takes participants on an historical and cultural journey across the U.S.

“This year, we hope to again award 1,000 scholarships to deserving military spouses and children. We’re hard at work bringing on new corporate, foundation, and individual sponsors,” said Jeri Thomson, President of ThanksUSA.

Oriana Futrell’s husband has been serving in Iraq for the last year. She was awarded a scholarship, which helped her finish school. “When you’re supporting a spouse, you’re supporting a soldier. And when you support a soldier, you support America. It means so much to the troops to know their families are being supported.”

Information on scholarship applications and sponsor opportunities, as well as registration instructions for the American History Treasure Hunt, can be found on the ThanksUSA Web site, www.ThanksUSA.org.