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## **ThanksUSA Begins Fourth Year of College Scholarships for Military Spouses and Children**

*April 1<sup>st</sup> marks first day for scholarship application acceptance*

WASHINGTON, April 1, 2009 – ThanksUSA, a charitable effort to mobilize Americans of all ages to “thank” our active-duty troops by providing college scholarships to their spouses and dependents, today opened its fourth year accepting applications for scholarships.

Interested applicants can find eligibility requirements and the official application form at [www.ThanksUSA.org](http://www.ThanksUSA.org). Applications will be accepted from April 1 through May 15, 2009.

“ThanksUSA had an amazing year in 2008, awarding 400 scholarships for a total of \$1.2 million to the families of the men and women who provide such an invaluable service to our country,” said Bob Okun, chairman and CEO of ThanksUSA. “We’re excited to begin accepting this year’s applications, and hope that these scholarships reflect the nation’s appreciation for our men and women in uniform.”

ThanksUSA began in 2005 as the idea of two Virginia schoolgirls as a way to mobilize Americans to thank active-duty troops for defending our freedoms. Over the past three years, ThanksUSA has awarded more than \$5 million in need-based, post-secondary scholarships to more than 1,750 spouses and children of military members serving on active-duty status. Scholarships have been awarded in all 50 states and the District of Columbia to families representing all branches of the Armed Forces, including the Guard and Reserves.

ThanksUSA embraced new partnerships in 2008 with the Jenzabar Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Jenzabar, Inc., and the ESA Foundation, the charitable arm of the Entertainment Software Association (ESA).

The Jenzabar Foundation recognizes and supports the good works and humanitarian efforts of student leaders serving others across the global community. Recently, through a special \$30,000 grant, the Jenzabar Foundation sponsored 10 college scholarships to students who applied for financial support through ThanksUSA. The individuals who received the Jenzabar/ThanksUSA scholarships were expressly recognized for their community service.



“The Jenzabar Foundation is proud to partner with ThanksUSA and provide additional resources to the children and spouses of active duty military who are seeking higher education,” said Robert A. Maginn Jr., chairman of the Jenzabar Foundation and CEO and chairman of the Board of Jenzabar, Inc. “We applaud the efforts of ThanksUSA and the efforts of their scholarship recipients in supporting the present and future of our country.”

This past Thanksgiving, ThanksUSA unveiled *Treasure Hunt Four*, which was sponsored by the ESA Foundation, as part of a new three-year partnership that aims to increase the number of scholarships available to military families. *Treasure Hunt Four* features more than 300 questions on a variety of states plus branches of the U.S. armed forces. Once the game ends on August 15, 2009, ThanksUSA will award prizes, including laptops and gift certificates, to the winner of each game “chapter.” Contestants may access the game on ThanksUSA’s Web site.

ThanksUSA also welcomed Harry Martin, Jr., president and chief executive officer of defense-related IT company Intelligent Decisions – the premier sponsor of ThanksUSA’s charity golf tournament last spring – to their board of directors in 2008.

“With continued financial support from corporations, foundations and individuals such as Blavatnik Charitable Foundation, KPMG, The Pershing Square Foundation and others, we plan to award 500 scholarships at \$3,000 each for a total of \$1.5 million this year,” said Michele Stork, executive director of ThanksUSA. “We encourage people across America to continue to invest in the families who have done so much for our country by donating to the Scholarship Program.”

These need-based scholarships will be awarded on a competitive basis to the spouses and children of active-duty military personnel who plan to pursue a post-secondary education, including vocational and technical training. Recipients will be selected on the basis of financial need, demonstrated leadership, and participation in school and community activities.

Interested parties can apply online and learn more about the effort at [www.ThanksUSA.org](http://www.ThanksUSA.org).

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### **About ThanksUSA**

Founded in the fall of 2005, ThanksUSA, a non-partisan 501(c) (3) organization, is an effort to thank the men and women of our armed forces and their families for their service to the country with the gift of education. The organization provides need-based, post-secondary education opportunities to the children and spouses of active-duty status military personnel through competitive scholarships. For more information visit [www.ThanksUSA.org](http://www.ThanksUSA.org).