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ThanksUSA Announces Collaboration to Promote \$4 Million Scholarship Fund for Military Families

CinCHouse/Operation Homefront and MilitaryConnection.com Join Forces with ThanksUSA to Promote Scholarship Awards in Advance of May 30th Deadline

WASHINGTON, D.C. – ThanksUSA, a non-partisan, 501(c)(3) organization, announced today a partnership with CinCHouse.com/Operation Homefront and a sponsorship by Militaryconnection.com to encourage military spouses and children to apply for the organization's \$4 million college, vocational and technical school scholarship fund in advance of the May 30, 2006 application deadline.

ThanksUSA was founded by two Virginia elementary public school children, Rachel and Kelsi Okun, ages 10 and 8. The scholarships are funded by federal, corporate and individual contributions.

Additional donations for the scholarship fund are expected to come from the first-ever nationwide treasure hunt staged to support military troops. In this treasure hunt, participants of all ages will navigate their way through 12 challenging puzzles, each based on a U.S. state, with clues rooted in American history, culture and geography. Information and applications for both the scholarships and the treasure hunt can be found at www.ThanksUSA.org.

“We wanted to show that we care about military families,” said Kelsi, who, along with her sister Rachel, is the primary architect behind the treasure hunt. “They make sacrifices for our country just like our troops, and we wanted to say ‘thanks,’” added Rachel, ThanksUSA's co-founder.

Scholarship Application Enrollment Open – Ends May 30

ThanksUSA intends to award at least 1,000 scholarships in amounts of up to \$5,000 each. These need-based scholarships will be awarded on a competitive basis to the spouses and children of active duty

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military personnel who plan to pursue a post-secondary education, including vocational and technical training. Winners will be selected on the basis of financial need, academic record, demonstrated leadership and participation in school and community activities. Preference will also be given to students who have studied a foreign language. Interested applicants can find more information, eligibility requirements and the official application form at www.ThanksUSA.org. Applications will be accepted through May 30, 2006.

“*CinCHouse.com* and Operation Homefront support and endorse ThanksUSA and its mission of providing educational scholarships to military spouses and children,” said *CinCHouse.com* Founder and Chairman Meredith Leyva. “We’ve been impressed and inspired by the patriotism and creativity of Rachel and Kelsi, their family and the entire ThanksUSA organization. We’re proud to be associated with such a good and worthy cause.”

Debbie Gregory, President of Military Connection.com, added, “MilitaryConnection.com is delighted to be a sponsor of this extraordinary project benefiting military families. Rachel and Kelsi, ThanksUSA, *CinCHouse* and Operation Homefront demonstrate the heart and soul of America.”

“Our partnership with *CinCHouse.com/Operation Homefront* in combination with our sponsorship from Militaryconnection.com will help spread the word about this important scholarship opportunity,” said Kevin Dowdell, Executive Director of ThanksUSA. “This cooperative effort will facilitate ThanksUSA’s goal of thanking military families with the invaluable gift of education.”

About ThanksUSA

ThanksUSA, a 501(c)(3) organization, is a unique national effort to thank the men and women of our armed forces and their families. Founded in the fall of 2005, ThanksUSA is dedicated to providing educational opportunities through competitive scholarships to the children and spouses of active duty military personnel. An acronym for **T**reasure **H**unt **A**iding **N**eeds of **K**ids (and spouses) of those **S**erving the **U**nited **S**tates of **A**merica, see www.ThanksUSA.org for more information.

About CinCHouse.com/Operation Homefront

Operation Homefront is a non-profit organization that provides assistance to military families while service members are deployed. With 26 chapters nationwide, we support our nation's troops by allowing military personnel to focus on the demands of their duties abroad. Operation Homefront also operates *CinCHouse.com*, the largest online community of military wives and women in uniform. For more information, please visit www.operationhomefront.net.

About Militaryconnection.com

MilitaryConnection.com offers one of the most comprehensive online directories of military resources and information featuring over 800 pages with over 10,000 valuable links. Focusing on connecting top corporations with outstanding military and military spouse candidates, the web site features over 7,500 corporations in their Directory of Employers. MilitaryConnection.com also supports military families and encourages their clients to make direct donations to many worthy military non-profits through their Charity Connection. They are providing valuable services to this project. See www.militaryconnection.com or contact Debbie Gregory at 800/817-3777 or debbieg@militaryconnection.com for more information.