



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 1, 2011

Contact: Amanda Belcher
(202) 326-1724
amanda.belcher@edelman.com

ThanksUSA Begins Sixth Year of College Scholarships for Military Spouses and Children on April 1st

WASHINGTON, April 1, 2011 – 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 sixth year of accepting applications for scholarships.

Interested applicants can find eligibility requirements and the link for the online application at www.ThanksUSA.org. Applications will be accepted from April 1 through May 15, 2011.

“ThanksUSA had an amazing year in 2010, awarding 256 scholarships to the families of our men and women in uniform, and we’re pleased to begin accepting this year’s applications,” said Bob Okun, chairman and CEO of ThanksUSA. “With our newly created scholarships in honor of our close friend, the late Senator Ted Stevens, and a generous donation from Kaplan University, we hope to help more families than ever.”

ThanksUSA recently established the “Senator Ted Stevens Commemorative Scholarships” in honor of the late Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK) and will award 50 scholarships worth \$3,000 each to children and spouses of U.S. military personnel pursuing post-secondary school education. These scholarships are supported by donations from Lockheed Martin, Oshkosh Defense, Atria, The Rumsfeld Foundation, KPMG LLP, TimeWarner, Express Scripts, General Electric, Northrop Grumman, EADS and EMC.

“As a veteran who visited our troops all over the world, my husband admired and deeply respected those who serve. These scholarships honor their sacrifices,” said Catherine Stevens, widow of the late senator. “Ted believed education was vitally important to both personal and professional development and should be accessible to all, and I know he would be touched to be honored in this way.”

For the 2011 scholarship season, ThanksUSA was the recipient of a generous donation from Kaplan University that will provide a full scholarship to the school as well as a number of partial scholarships to cover more than 50 percent of tuition costs.

“Kaplan University and ThanksUSA share a similar mission of providing greater access to higher education for military personnel and their families,” said Scott Kilgore, senior vice



president of Military Affairs at Kaplan University. “This donation is an extension of our commitment to make earning a college degree a reality for more military families.”

ThanksUSA began in 2005 when two Virginia schoolgirls sought to mobilize Americans to thank active-duty troops for defending our freedoms. Since 2006, ThanksUSA has awarded more than \$6 million in need-based, post-secondary scholarships to almost 2,200 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, and the families of the wounded and fallen.

“We are continually amazed by the generosity of our partner corporations, foundations and individuals, and with their financial support, 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.

Thanks to the continued support from donors such as the ESA Foundation, Blavatnik Family Foundation, Goldman Sachs, The Boeing Company, Kilpatrick Stockton, Folds of Honor Foundation, No Greater Sacrifice Foundation, and Intelligent Decisions, and others, ThanksUSA will award need-based scholarships on a competitive basis to the spouses and children of active-duty military personnel.

ThanksUSA provides scholarships to military spouses and dependents to pursue a full-time post-secondary education, including vocational and technical training. Last year they expanded the program to also include scholarships for spouses seeking licenses, certifications and other forms of education.

Interested parties can apply online and learn more about the effort at www.ThanksUSA.org.

###

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 need-based scholarships. For more information visit www.ThanksUSA.org.