



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ThanksUSA Opens 2017 Scholarship Application Season for Children and Spouses of Armed Forces

\$100 Million Pathways for Patriots Career Initiative Provides Mentoring and Internship Programs

McLean, Virginia (March 31, 2017) – On April 1, ThanksUSA will launch the 2017 application season for financial need-based scholarships benefiting the children and spouses of our service men and women. The national non-profit organization, dedicated to thanking U.S. troops through the gift of education, is accepting applications at www.ThanksUSA.org beginning tomorrow through May 15, 2017.

“1.1 million children and 700,000 spouses are dependents of our country’s more than half a million service members. Yet the majority of military families live on one income alone. The result is an enormous financial gap for family members aspiring to higher education and subsequent careers,” said ThanksUSA President Kevin Schmiegel. “Through ThanksUSA’s scholarships and *Pathways for Patriots* initiative, we aim to reflect the gratitude of all Americans by helping to fulfill career dreams and provide economic stability for our military families who sacrifice so much for our nation.”

ThanksUSA’s \$100 million *Pathways for Patriots* initiative combines scholarships with mentoring, internships and employment engagement with corporate partners to help establish careers and fill millions of vacant jobs. U.S. workforce shortfalls exceed 5.5 million jobs in disciplines including science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM); public service; healthcare; manufacturing; financial services; and hospitality. *Pathways for Patriots* creates a talent pipeline of ThanksUSA scholars for hard-to-fill occupations, and industry partners provide scholarships and nurture that talent with internships, mentoring and other programs.

- Leading the way are founding sponsors and supporters of the *Pathway to Tech/STEM* Lockheed Martin, a global security and aerospace company, and Smiths Group, the world’s premiere manufacturer of sensors for detecting material threats to national security.
- *Pathway to Public Service* boasts 40 scholarships recognizing the international humanitarian work and domestic education and health initiatives of Mary Jo Myers, wife of Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman General Richard Myers.
- Kaplan University supports scholarships for online study, including five full-tuition, four-year grants to study STEM, public service and application-driven needs; five full-tuition and five partial-tuition scholarships for military spouses who are licensed registered nurses (RN) and want to enhance their education by obtaining a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN); and five full-tuition and five partial-tuition scholarships for those who currently hold an Associate's Degree and would like to earn their Bachelor's Degree through Kaplan’s Online University.

“Championing individuals like Army spouse and mother of three Andrea Barreiro, who aspires to a business career, is our way of expanding the nation’s workforce and building solid financial futures for the spouses and children of our armed forces,” said Meg O’Grady, Kaplan’s Vice President, Military and Public Sector Solutions. “Ms. Barreiro is a role model to her daughters and an example of the intrinsic talent among those who serve on the battlefield and here at home.”

Since its inception in 2006, ThanksUSA has awarded nearly 4,000 scholarships of \$3,000 each, totaling more than \$12 million. Almost 2,000 applications are received annually, with families of the fallen and wounded given special consideration.

Additional support for ThanksUSA’s *Pathways* program and the education fund comes from donors including, Altria, Apex, the Blavatnik Family Foundation, Centene Corporation, CVS Health, Intelligent Decisions, KPMG, The Kovner Foundation, Monster Energy, Navy Postgraduate School Foundation, Paladin Capital Group, Pershing Square Foundation, Red Cloud Food Services, Rumsfeld Foundation, Strada Education Network formerly USA Funds and others. In-kind support comes from American Airlines, CSRA, Edelman, Loews Hotels, Marriott Hotels, Squire Patton Boggs, and others.

For applications, eligibility requirements and more information, please visit www.ThanksUSA.org.

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About ThanksUSA

ThanksUSA is a non-partisan, charitable effort to mobilize Americans of all ages to “thank” the men and women of the United States Armed Forces. The organization provides college, technical and vocational school scholarships to the children and spouses of military personnel.