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USO to Open New Center at Columbia Metro Airport, South Carolina

Existing Armed Forces Lounge to be Turned into the State's Only USO

ARLINGTON, Va. – The USO proudly announces plans to open a new center at the Columbia Metropolitan Airport in South Carolina, extending its morale-boosting programs and services to transiting troops and their families. The airport's existing Armed Forces Lounge will be converted into a USO center to serve more than 146,000 troops and their families as they travel through the greater Columbia area in route to Fort Jackson, Fort Gordon, Shaw Air Force Base, the 81st Regional Support Command and McEntire Joint National Guard Station. The new center is expected to open fall 2009.

"I am pleased to announce our plans for a new USO center at Columbia Metropolitan Airport," said USO president Sloan Gibson. "We look forward to partnering with the Airport Commission, Columbia Chamber of Commerce and community and business leaders to make this a facility worthy of the service and sacrifice of our troops and their families."

"With our military personnel serving bravely around the world, the USO has always been at the forefront of entertaining and caring for our brave troops and their families," said Congressman Joe Wilson (SC-02). "As a 31-year veteran of the Army Reserve and Guard as well as a father of four sons serving in our armed forces, I am grateful that the USO has chosen to establish a center at the Columbia Metropolitan Airport."

The 1,100 square-foot location will feature a Cyber Café with free Internet and email access, entertainment lounge complete with large screen television and video gaming systems, library and kitchen areas offering travel-weary troops pre-packaged snacks and beverages. Troops also will be able to participate in the United Through Reading® Military Program.

As a nonprofit organization, the USO relies on the generosity of the American public to support its network of more than 135 centers worldwide. Corporate in-kind donations and sponsorships, along with volunteer hours and monetary contributions, help make the USO a success. Donations to support this center should be mailed to P.O. Box 5080, West Columbia, S.C. 29171. For volunteer opportunities, please contact Carol Davis at armedforceslounge@yahoo.com or (803) 822-7953. To learn more about the USO and how you can help, visit www.uso.org.

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About the USO

The USO (United Service Organizations) lifts the spirits of America's troops and their families. The USO is a nonprofit, charitable organization, relying on the generosity of the American people to support its programs and services. The USO is supported by Worldwide Strategic Partners AT&T Inc., BAE Systems, The Boeing Company, Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc., Clear Channel Communications, The Coca-Cola Company, Gallery Furniture, Lockheed Martin, Microsoft Corporation, Northrop Grumman Corporation, S & K Sales Co. and TriWest Healthcare Alliance. Other corporate donors, including the United Way and Combined Federal Campaign (CFC-11381), have joined millions of individual donors to support the USO. For more information, please visit our Web site at www.uso.org.