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**USO Puget Sound Gala and Auction Sets New Records
Flagship event raises over \$325,000 and sets new attendance record
Northrop Grumman and Charles Simonyi Fund announce surprise donations**

SEATTLE – Calling it “the most successful event in the organization’s history,” the USO Puget Sound Area (USOPSA) announced today that the 2009 5 Star Gala and Auction raised over \$325,000 and set a new attendance record. Over 460 people attended the annual fundraising event at the Museum of Flight in Seattle on Friday, Oct. 9th. The event included the surprise announcement of \$25,000 donations each from Northrop Grumman and the Charles Simonyi Fund.

Tom Jaffa, USOPSA board chairman and president and CEO of The Jaffa Company, says, “To achieve our best results ever -- especially in light of the challenges in this economy -- is a real testament to the value our local citizens and companies place on the important mission of the USOPSA. It was also an honor to have Sloan Gibson, president and CEO of USO World, on hand to witness the outpouring of local support for our service centers and programs.”

Don Leingang, USOPSA executive director, says this year’s auction effort is the strongest to-date and reflects the depth of support within the community for the region’s military. “The evening was a great success and reinforced the importance of what the USOPSA does for our local military and their families,” says Leingang. “We were overwhelmed by the outpouring of kindness from the 460 people who attended and those people who could not attend, but who still made contributions to the cause.”

The top auction item of the evening went to Sunny Kobe Cook, founder and former CEO of Sleep Country U.S.A. with a winning bid of \$6,000 for a “behind-the-scenes package” with Gary Sinise on the set of CSI: New York in Los Angeles.

The “Raise the Paddle” effort to remodel the McChord USO Center and support additional programs raised over \$110,000 and included an anonymous gift of \$10,000 in honor of soldier Clinton Douglas Johnson.

Don Brunell, president of the Association of Washington Business, and the gala honorary chairman, says, “The USO Gala was a great success thanks to the hundreds of hours of volunteer work. It was an honor for Jeri and me to be selected as the honorary co-chairs and to ask everyone to keep the
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men and women serving our country in their thoughts, prayers, and contribution budgets throughout the year. As retired military, we live close to Ft. Lewis and we can see the strain on families from extended deployments. We can't imagine what it would be like for these service members and their families without the support of organizations like the USO."

A performance by country artist, Mallery Hope, was a surprise gift from long time USOPSA sponsor, KMPS. Becky Brenner, program director/digital web manager KMPS-FM/CBS Seattle, says, "KMPS was thrilled to bring Mallery back to the northwest. Her family ties to the military and more specifically to our area, made her a perfect fit. Her single *Love Lives On* is amazing and her live show set just the right tone for a night of giving and supporting our local military."

To view Mallery singing the National Anthem, click on the link below:

[National Anthem For The USO PSA Event in Seattle Video by Mallery...](#)

To learn more about the USO Puget Sound Area, go to USOpsa.org