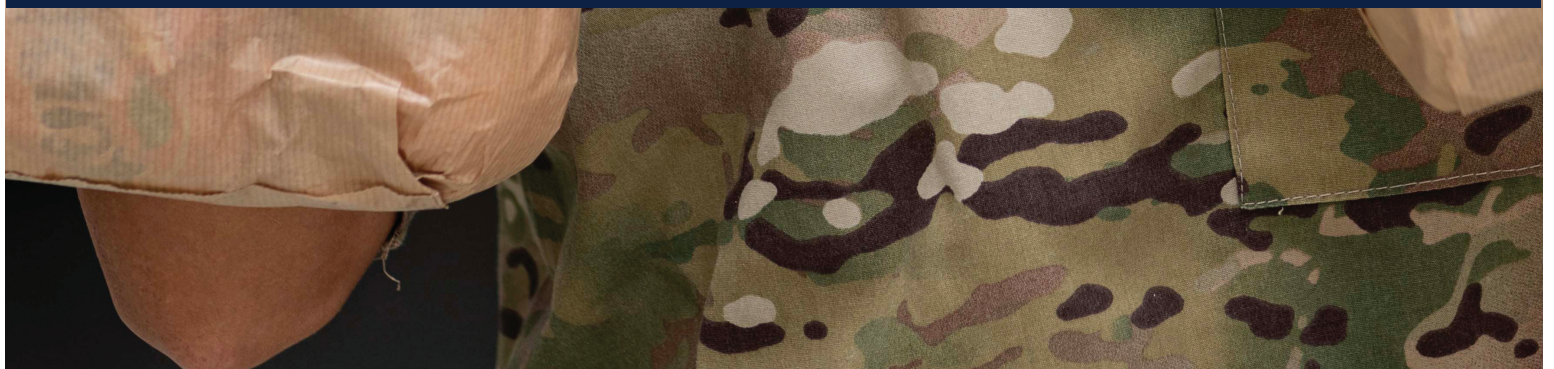




COMBAT COVID-19 INITIATIVE:  
**Relief Efforts**  
SUMMER 2020







## Introduction

Since March, as the world faced an unprecedented pandemic, our military members continued their mission to serve, while also pivoting to relief efforts to help our entire nation. **Like all of us, service members' lives have been disrupted with childcare facilities closed, spouses laid off, births and weddings missed and social distancing and quarantines causing additional stress.** However, whether stationed here in the U.S. or abroad, our service members could not abandon their mission even as they faced these new challenges right alongside us.

During this difficult time, and because of it, the importance of the USO's mission to promote a healthy, resilient, confident and prepared military remained crucial. Despite a challenging landscape, and because of your support, the USO was able to quickly pivot to ensure critical programs and services were delivered where they were needed the most, even while the health, safety and welfare of our employees, volunteers and service members remained a top priority.

Your immediate response to support the USO Combat COVID-19 Initiative meant we were able to quickly find innovative ways to help — **such as supporting our quarantined service men and women with hygiene packs and medical gear, sharing top-notch programs and entertainment virtually for military members and their families, and delivering food, refreshments and a welcomed break from the stress of the day to active duty, National Guard and Reservists working on the front lines of the virus.** You helped make it all possible. Thank you.



## By the Numbers

You've helped support **over 2.4 million USO Moments** in response to the needs that have emerged as a result of the global pandemic, including:



OVER  
**400,000**  
MOMENTS OF CONTINUED  
**FRONT-LINE**  
**SUPPORT**

Delivering materials, supplies and much-needed morale for those working in the military medical community, screening visitors, managing security checkpoints and activated members of the National Guard, on the front lines of COVID-19 relief efforts.



SUPPORTING THE  
SAILORS FROM THE USS  
THEODORE ROOSEVELT  
DELIVERING MORE THAN

**11,000**  
hygiene and  
snack packages

**20,000**  
masks

**3,000**  
KN95 masks

**300**  
protective suits

**2,000**  
hot meals

**400**  
Wi-Fi hot spots



DELIVERING  
more than  
**40,000**  
care  
packages  
AND

**48**  
**USO2GO**  
**KITS**

DEPLOYING  
7 MOBILE USO CENTERS,  
**OVER 13K MILES,**  
*supporting 25 individual*  
*State National Guards*  
**DISTRIBUTING OVER 100K**  
**INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT ITEMS**  
ON THE FRONT LINES OF THE COVID-19  
COMMUNITY RESPONSE EFFORTS.

HOLDING OVER  
**3,457 Virtual Events**  
WITH  
OVER **250,000 VIEWERS**  
**MILITARY AND THEIR FAMILIES**  
ISOLATED BY SOCIAL DISTANCING  
& STAY-AT-HOME REQUIREMENTS

DEPLOYING OVER  
**50 TRUCKLOADS**  
of food, drinks and electrolytes  
**ACROSS THE NATION AND AROUND THE WORLD**

*supporting active duty, National Guard,*  
*Reservists and their families*







## Coming Together to Make a Difference: Our COVID-19 Relief Efforts

### ENTERTAINING AND ASSISTING SERVICE MEMBERS VIRTUALLY

Since 1941, USO Entertainment Tours have provided a much-needed stress release and made lasting impressions on service members and their families – no matter where they are stationed or deployed. With COVID-19 pandemic restrictions in place, celebrities could no longer physically jump up on stage, but your support allowed the USO to quickly adapt our traditional entertainment tours by launching a military virtual programming series, USO MVP. Because of your generosity, livestreaming video, Q&As and performances were virtually sent to military bases and service members' cell phones – all around the world – to boost morale and keep service members connected to home and country.

**Celebrities of all kinds – actors, comedians, musicians, chefs and more – raised their hands to participate, providing unscripted and genuine moments of joy during a time of uncertainty.** The line-up has included Grammy Award-winning musicians, Academy and Golden-Globe award winning actors, Super Bowl champions and so many more.

Additionally, **thanks to your support**, other USO services have been provided virtually to ensure the military community stays connected and remains resilient; such as Coffee Connections, transition seminars, family craft activities and local community updates and live streams.



Troops deployed to Afghanistan showcased their musical talent through Facebook Live videos, in the fifth semi-annual "Bagram's Got Talent" event. Military members, viewing from their socially distanced barracks, voted online and celebrities of all kinds dropped in to virtually say hello and thank them for their service.



Cooking classes and food programming are now being provided online through weekly livestream videos, including a special virtual cookie class hosted by Martha Stewart and so many more.

### CASE STUDY

#### USO Pathfinder® Provides Guidance Amid Pandemic

An estimated 200,000-plus service members transition out of the military each year, and more than 650,000 military spouses are constantly transitioning. **USO Pathfinder helps as they transition from the military and settle into their new civilian communities.** The program also supports military spouses at any point in their military journey. Currently, USO Pathfinder services are continuing online for service members and their families.

Due to COVID-19, many businesses across the world temporarily closed their doors and now, due to the economic downturn, some may close their doors permanently. USO Pathfinder is working hard to help out-of-work military spouses use this time effectively and prepare for what lies ahead.

"We want people to know that despite the uncertainty of the job market, there is no time like the present to prepare for your transition," Fort Campbell USO Pathfinder site manager Lindsey Geraci said. "Use this time to virtually meet with a Pathfinder scout, refine your resume, practice interviewing, research educational opportunities, make a budget or learn a new skill. The world will not be closed forever, and we want you to be prepared as best you can."



Longtime USO supporter, actress and comedian Iliza Shlesinger, delivered laughs and moments of levity to service members deployed overseas during a USO MVP livestream event.





## Providing for Service Members on the Front Lines of COVID-19

### MAINTAINING STRONG CONNECTIONS BY OFFERING FRONT-LINE SUPPORT:

Tens of thousands of National Guard members and Reservists answered the call, and many continue to serve, as part of the ongoing fight against COVID-19. While the world was adjusting to quarantines and drastic changes in daily life, U.S. service members left their families and deployed to hospital ships, field hospitals, makeshift care facilities and other locations across the globe to help local communities contain the spread of the virus. With your help, the USO was there to ensure our service members on the front lines of the pandemic had the personal items and meals they needed so they could focus on the task at hand.



To date, 7 Mobile USO Centers have been deployed across the United States, supporting roughly 25 individual State Guards and driving over 13K miles. Acting as USO centers on wheels, these state-of-the-art mobile vehicles have distributed over 100K individual support items and provided service members a place to relax during downtime and a chance to grab a snack or meal. The need in the field is constantly being reassessed while working closely with the National Guard Bureau.

With your help, the USO locations from San Diego to Los Angeles provided support to service members aboard the USNS Mercy; from toiletry kits and refreshments prior to departure in San Diego, to food and supply support pier side as the ship docked in Los Angeles, the USO remained by their side. As front-line workers continued their efforts onboard the ship, the USO West Region remained in contact with the ship and was able to support throughout the Mercy's time in Los Angeles, providing food, water, Wi-Fi, entertainment engagement and toiletries as needed. The USO San Diego team was there to welcome the ship back to its home port once the mission was completed. With your help, the USO was there to support these front-line service members with things like water, refreshments and other amenities and services.



The USNS Comfort docked in New York City to bring much-needed medical assistance to the metropolitan area. The Comfort is staffed with roughly 1,000 military medical professionals – including doctors, nurses and physician assistants – who were deployed to provide reinforcement for the medical community in our nation's most critical COVID-19 epicenter and help care for patients from overwhelmed civilian hospitals. Thanks to generous donors like you, the USO ensured these men and women had what they needed by providing many classic USO amenities – from toiletry kits to comfort foods to gym equipment and Wi-Fi, which helped them stay connected with their families back home.



### CASE STUDY

#### Florida Front-Line Workers get “No Dough” Lunch on USO

Florida National Guard members partnered with the local fire authorities to administer COVID-19 test kits at Jacksonville's walk-up testing site. These local first responders also got to enjoy a complimentary lunch, thanks to the USO. Normally, USO Centers around the world host no-cost meal programs on a daily, weekly and/or monthly basis — many called “No Dough Dinners” — around lunchtime and/or suppertime for service members and their families. These dinners offer a much-needed opportunity to connect socially and often help bridge gaps when they are nearing the end of a pay-cycle. Due to COVID-19, the USO team adjusted the program to take place at lunchtime to meet the needs of Florida National Guard members helping in the fight against the coronavirus.

“The USO is always uplifting for the soldiers,” said 1st Lt. Michael Purvis, the commander of the unit. “I have seen the USO through deployments, through hurricanes, they are always there. It is always amazing to me what they are able to provide.”

Although faced with the challenges the global pandemic presented, the USO was able to respond rapidly on a worldwide scale in support of our military and their families, including the National Guard called to the aid of our communities across America. Because of the unwavering support of people like you, the USO is able to maintain the agility and scope to be by the side of those serving our country and their families – reaching them no matter where they serve and under all conditions.





## Helping Service Members Stay Connected from a Distance

### MAINTAINING STRONG CONNECTIONS BY OFFERING FOOD AND PROGRAMMING FROM A DISTANCE:

With strict safety precautions in place due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, USO locations around the world have gotten even more creative with their programming in support of the military community. Like the rest of the world, in-person gatherings had to stop temporarily, social distancing was implemented and military families were asked to stay home. But that didn't stop the USO from providing the morale-boosting offerings it is known for and the critical, resiliency-building community programming that brings military and their families closer together. Your gift made that possible.



USO Erbil in Iraq took the Bob Hope Legacy Reading Program on the road by turning the back of a pickup truck into a "reading room" and then driving the truck around base, stopping to let military moms and dads film themselves reading a book to their child. The USO Team then mails the recording, and the book, home to the families.



USO centers brought their creative and engaging programs right into homes, for military children and adults alike, often combining virtual programming with deliveries and to-go hands-on activity packages. USO Humphreys started a virtual gardening club and distributed more than 200 planting kits. USO New England still held their annual "Military Kids Are Heroes Too" celebration with a drive-thru pick up of a themed goodies package for each child, who then joined virtually with other kids for the big day. USO of Illinois shipped LEGO® kits all over the state and then hosted a LEGO® Master online for everyone to learn how to build the project and customize it. From livestreamed craft-making and painting classes to virtual scavenger hunts and dance classes — there's something for everyone and all accessible online.



Military spouses can take advantage of now-virtual programs that promote networking and connection, such as USO Coffee Connections, where they can discuss hot topics and challenges within the military community. USO Kaiserslautern, in Germany, hosted two of USO's "Special Delivery: Virtual Baby Shower" with Heidi Murkoff, complete with virtual baby shower games, drawings and an engaging Q&A with the best-selling author of the "What to Expect" book series.



USO centers around the world have implemented delivery or "take out" snacks and meals — with many centers including a family movie. USO Fort Drum has "Sack Lunch to Go" twice a week. While Schofield Barracks, in Hawaii, hosts Kids Grab & Go Movie Night and Andersen AFB has Movie to Go Kits which are both quite popular...just to name a few.

### CASE STUDY

#### Service Member Colby Boltz Meets His Daughter for the First Time

First-time parents Paige and Colby Boltz welcomed Stella Rosalee Boltz on April 8 at Hershey Medical Center in Pennsylvania. Colby, 26, is stationed in Southwest Asia as member of the U.S. Air National Guard. He was supposed to be home to welcome his new daughter, but his return was delayed 60 days because of the pandemic, so he contacted the USO to see how they could help.

The USO set up a special room and ensured it had stable Wi-Fi so he could "FaceTime" Paige during the birth.

"I'm incredibly thankful for the kindness and support from the USO staff during the birth of my daughter," Colby said in a statement. **"Because of them, I was able to see her birth, hear her first cry, and be able to support my wife while making the distance seem not so far."**



## Supporting Quarantined Troops

### MAINTAINING STRONG CONNECTIONS BY BOOSTING MORALE AMONG QUARANTINED SERVICE MEMBERS:

Service members around the world have been quarantined, for their own safety and the safety of their units, or have had their movements restricted. Being in quarantine can be a stressful and lengthy process. This is especially true for troops who are stationed overseas or have just returned from deployment, but then must immediately sit through 14 days of quarantine before they can head home to their loved ones. For military members who are diagnosed with the virus, such as those who were impacted by the outbreak on the USS Theodore Roosevelt, the situation is even more tense. That's why — with the help of donors like you — USO teams across the world have been able to support these quarantined service members. In close coordination with military commands, the USO provides the things that matter most to our service members to show them that the American people support them and are grateful for their service.



In quarantine locations overseas, thanks to your support, the USO was able to provide electronic kits that included Wi-Fi connectivity capability, TVs, gaming systems and movies to keep quarantined troops entertained and connected to their families and aware of what was happening around the world.



Many of the returning service members arrived through Fort Bliss, an Army base in El Paso, Texas, where the USO team assembled thousands of USO Care Packages, as well as entertainment such as board games, to provide a little fun and a bit of home during quarantine.

After weeks of assisting in medical facilities, National Guard members headed back to their civilian lives. However, they also had to first complete a mandatory 14-day quarantine. In California, the Bob Hope USO team created special morale bags filled with snacks and activity books to help them pass the time.



### CASE STUDY

#### When USS Theodore Roosevelt Sailors Were in Need, the USO Was There

In late March, the USS Theodore Roosevelt and its crew hit the headlines after several sailors onboard tested positive for COVID-19. While much of the world fixated on other details, the USO Guam team focused on meeting the immediate critical needs — like toiletries and meals — of the thousands of sailors who suddenly became long-term guests of the U.S. Pacific territory. In close collaboration with the local community and military, **the USO team prepared and distributed 11,000 USO Care Packages filled with snacks and hygiene kits to quarantined service members housed on Guam and those sailors still working aboard the ship.**

One service member sent a note to USO Guam saying, “Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the amazing care packages I received today while in quarantine. The toiletry kit was much needed since I was running low on a few items, as well as the morale-lifting snacks that came in the care package. You have lifted our spirits and made us feel appreciated during our time dealing with this pandemic. With your help we’ll be back to full strength and back out to sea before we know it.”





## Conclusion

For over 79 years, the USO has always been by the side of our military, from peaceful times to heightened conflicts. Yet today, we are all navigating new territory with COVID-19. Nevertheless, our teams are developing and rapidly deploying alternative methods to deliver our best-in-class support, all while ensuring the health and safety of our staff, volunteers and those we serve.

USO teams across every region and around the world are in daily communications with local military installations and we are adjusting our operational stance to be in alignment with their needs. In addition to our programs and services that have been unaffected by the pandemic restrictions and are continuing as usual, we are finding new ways to meet new needs. Although this report highlights some of the ways we are adapting, it is just the tip of the iceberg. There's so much more going on at USO locations all around the world.

We could never do this successfully without the support of our tremendous donors. It is because of you that we have been able to quickly adjust to this "new normal" and ensure our service members don't feel forgotten.

**Every day provides a new set of unique challenges, and because of you, we can continue to persevere to find a way to be there for our Armed Forces. Thank you.**



The USO is a not-for-profit organization and not part of the Department of Defense (DoD). The appearance of DoD visual information does not imply or constitute DoD endorsement.