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7. **INTRODUCTION**

The USO strengthens America’s military service members by keeping them connected to family, home and country, throughout their service to the nation. We are the Force Behind the Forces.

For more than 76 years, the USO, a private, nonprofit organization, has served the men and women

of the U.S. military and their families throughout their service – from the moment they join, through their deployments and as they transition back to their communities.

Today’s service members need the care, comfort, connection and support that can only be provided by an organization that is with them at every point of their military journey, wherever they serve. The USO is continuously adapting to the needs of our men and women in uniform and their families, so they can focus on their very important mission. We are a family of volunteers, sustained by the charitable contributions of millions of generous Americans and united in our commitment to support America’s service members by keeping them connected to the very things they’ve sworn to defend – home and family. Our work is America’s most powerful expression of gratitude to the men and women who secure our nation’s freedoms.

In September, the USO launched the [Force Behind the Forces](http://ctt.marketwire.com/?release=11G115764-001&id=9706312&type=0&url=http%3a%2f%2fwww.USO.org%2fFORCE)*,*a brand awareness campaign encouraging Americans to stand behind the Force, as a community of supporters committed to connecting service members to the things they hold dear. Being a Force Behind the Forces means demonstrating your appreciation of those who selflessly serve our nation.

The campaign underscores USO's historic mission of connection and simultaneously aims to address the [civilian-military drift](http://ctt.marketwire.com/?release=11G115764-001&id=9706315&type=0&url=https%3a%2f%2fwww.uso.org%2fstories%2f164-addressing-the-drift) – a natural disconnect and lack of understanding between those who have served in the military and those who have never served. It encourages a united American force driven to meet the needs of service members and their families, further connecting them to those they protect.

“Our hope is for this campaign to inspire action by showcasing tangible ways the American public can get involved in supporting the one percent who serve and protect," said USO CEO and President J.D. Crouch II. "The Force Behind the Forces is the USO platform to enable a connection between people in our communities and our military.”

1. **USO OPERATIONS**
2. **USO BY THE NUMBERS**
	* More than 200 Physical USO Locations
	* USO Locations in 13 Countries
		+ United States, Afghanistan, Australia, Djibouti, Germany, Italy, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Korea, Kuwait, Turkey, United Arab Emirates
	* USO Locations in 31 States/Territories
		+ AK, AZ, CA, CO, DE, FL, GA, Guam, HI, IL, IN, KS, KY, MA, MD, MO, MS, NC, NJ, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, TN, TX, VA, WA, WI
	* 6 Continents
		+ Supported through facilities and outreach programs
		+ All but Antarctica
	* Volunteers
		+ 30,000 Annual Volunteers
		+ 1.6M Annual Volunteer Hours
	* 11M Total Service Connections in 2016, worldwide
		+ 7.1M Center Visits
		+ 3.1M Center Program Participants
		+ 330,000 Entertainment Event Attendees
		+ 320,000 Expeditionary and Family Program Participants
		+ 28,000 Transition Program Participants
	* SWA Satellite Data
		+ 5,703,000 Minutes Talked
		+ 607,000 Calls Placed
		+ 686,000 Wi-Fi Sessions

**USO LOCATIONS**

USO locations provide a home away from home for service members and their families around the world. Our locations are the foundation for our connection to the military community and enable the USO to provide outreach support to surrounding areas where no physical facility exists. USO locations provide an inviting and comforting place where service members and their families can connect via internet or telephone, play a video game, catch a movie, have a snack or just put their feet up and relax.

USO global operations are organized into four geographic regions – Pacific, Europe, Southwest Asia, and Stateside, with leadership teams managing operations and conducting strategic support for the military in their respective geographic areas.

In 2016, the USO celebrated the opening of several new locations including Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson and Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska; Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Joint Base San Antonio, Texas; Hanscom Air Force Base, Massachusetts; Fort Jackson MEPS, South Carolina; Phoenix MEPS, Arizona; Denver MEPS, Colorado; Indianapolis MEPS, Indiana; Newark International Airport, New Jersey; Orlando International Airport, Florida; Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania; Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio; La Crosse Regional Airport, Wisconsin; Pohakuloa Training Area, Hawaii; Camp Kinser, Okinawa; Naval Air Station Sigonella, Italy; and Incirlik Air Base, Turkey.

**USO Pacific**

U.S military personnel in the Pacific play a critical role in keeping the peace and supporting American interests in this vital and rapidly changing part of the world. Through USO locations in Japan, Okinawa, South Korea, Guam and Hawaii, and through expeditionary programming sent wherever they deploy in the region, the USO strengthens our service members and their families so they can focus on their mission.

Pacific by the Numbers

28 Locations

775,000 Total Service Connections in 2016

**USO Europe**

U.S. forces serving in Europe play a critical role in deterring traditional military threats to our country and provide vital support to others deployed in combat operations in Southwest Asia, Africa and beyond. USO locations in Europe support those service members and their families by helping them stay connected to family, home and country, despite being stationed far from home. USO personnel also directly support troops exercising with our allies in more remote European locations.

Europe by the Numbers

21 Locations

834,000 Total Service Connections in 2016

**USO Southwest Asia**

U.S. forces are engaged in counterterrorism and combat operations throughout Southwest Asia. For service members deployed to this region, the USO has personnel and centers on the front lines where our military members serve. Nothing speaks louder about the commitment of the USO – and the trust the military has in us – than our presence alongside these warfighters.

Southwest Asia locations draw large numbers of service members primarily for connectivity, entertainment and relaxation. Additionally, local programs and activities like gaming events, holiday celebrations, creative arts and food-focused events provide a much-needed break from the demanding and difficult environment.

Southwest Asia by the Numbers

14 Locations

1.5M Total Service Connections in 2016

**USO Stateside**

America’s service members and their families are spread across our country supporting their deployed brothers and sisters, training to counter new threats to our freedoms or awaiting deployment overseas to remote and combat locations. The majority of the USO’s more than 200 global locations are here in the United States at their induction sites, at their training bases or in the airports they pass through. No other military organization has the trust and the reach of the USO.

Stateside-based operations are comprised of locations operating under two business models – directly managed and independent chartered organizations, or franchises. The network of USO centers across the country is strong, and the mission and impact of USO support is universal regardless of the operating model.

Stateside by the Numbers

158 Locations

69 US-Direct Report

89 US-Chartered Centers

3.9M Total Service Connections in 2016

1.5M US-Direct Report

2.4M US-Chartered Centers

**Types of Locations**

The global reach of the USO includes a diverse set of locations, all designed and established to meet the needs of their specific military community. While no two locations are the same, all fall into a category:

**Installation and Community Locations –** A majority of all USO locations fall into what is considered traditional and date back to the birth of the organization in 1941. In fact, one such traditional location in Jacksonville, North Carolina, has been in continuous operation for the entire 76-year history of the USO. Traditional centers offer core amenities, including connectivity (internet, phones, Wi-Fi), snacks and drinks and a home-like environment (comfortable seating, TVs, movies, video games). Traditional centers have small staffs and are largely supported and operated by a team of volunteers. Traditional centers host frequent programs or events and often have a regular schedule of activities.

**Airport Locations** – USO airport locations can be found across the country in major metropolitan areas, small communities and near major military installations, supporting service members and their families as they travel. Airport locations, both inside and outside of security, offer core amenities including connectivity (internet, phones, Wi-Fi), snacks and drinks and a home-like environment (comfortable seating, TVs, movies, video games). The USO’s network of airport locations are staffed by volunteers who welcome weary travelers and provide resources to ease travel burdens.

**MEPS Locations –** The Military Entrance Processing Stations (MEPS) is a Department of Defense joint-service organization staffed with military and civilian professionals who support enlistment at various locations across the US. In 2016, the USO expanded its presence to several more MEPS, providing additional support for service members on what may be the very first day of their military career. By increasing the USO’s presence at MEPS, we are able to introduce new recruits and their families to the wide range of USO support they’ll find during different phases of their military careers. Service members and their families visiting MEPS often experience long wait times for appointments and evaluations and the USO can provide relaxation space and entertainment to help them pass the time.

**Mobile Locations –** Dubbed “Traditional Centers on Wheels,” the fleet of vehicles can take our services to far-reaching corners of the world for however long we are needed. The vehicles, which operate in the U.S., Europe and the Pacific, range in size from commercial vans, to canteens and large recreational vehicles. In addition to supporting training exercises and bringing USO services to nearby installations, mobile locations also deploy to support our service members in the event of a local or national emergency.

**Expeditionary Support Locations –** Inremote and isolated areas of the world, where we find service members deployed, conducting training exercises or missions, Expeditionary Support Locations serve as an extension of USO support. Typically unmanned by paid staff, expeditionary sites can be found in the U.S., Pacific and Southwest Asia and offer traditional amenities including connectivity, snacks and a comfortable place to relax.

**Transition Locations –**Transition locations focus on coordinating services via a human connection and state-of-the-art technology to help service members and their families navigate the transition to civilian life.

1. **USO VOLUNTEERS:** Volunteers are the heart of the USO. They deliver goodness to our service members and their families in our centers and the community at locations around the world. The USO is honored to have 30,000 volunteers across the globe who gave 1.6 million hours last year in service to service members and families. In September, the USO announced its 2016 USO Volunteers of the Year. Ron Meier of Bob Hope USO at Palm Springs was the USO Volunteer of the Year, Stateside, and Ralph Nelsen of USO Osan, South Korea was the USO Volunteer of the Year, Overseas.
2. **USO PROGRAMS**

Who do we serve?

1. Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve
2. Military Families
3. Transitioning Service Members and their Families
4. Wounded, Ill and Injured Service Members, their Families and Caregivers
5. Families of the Fallen
6. **ACTIVE DUTY, NATIONAL GUARD and RESERVE**
7. **USO2GO:** Designed to send much-needed electronic gaming, sports/musical equipment and personal care items to service members in remote locations, USO2GO was launched in 2008 to ensure they have some of the small comforts of home. USO2GO boxes have been delivered to more than 800 remote places in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Philippines, Egypt, Djibouti, Jordan, Australia, Kuwait and Northwest Africa. To date, the USO has shipped more than 1,600 kits and USO2GO continues to be the program most requested directly from the field that helps our deployed service members relax and recharge.
8. **MOBILE USO CENTERS:** Acting as USO centers on wheels, Mobile USO centers offer service members the same kind of great support the USO provides in an airport or installation location. These large mobile centers travel to large events and military exercises to provide places for service members to relax during downtime, provide USO service to areas without a brick-and-mortar USO center and support our centers and the community in times of crisis. Each Mobile USO offers laptops, large-screen televisions, video game consoles, Wi-Fi access, casual seating, refrigerators, coffee makers and microwaves.

In 2016, the USO unveiled its newest Mobile USO that is 38 feet long with three slide outs and a canteen window that will be able to support more service members than its predecessors. It includes two 65-inch TVs, five Xbox gaming systems, internal and external sound systems and is wheelchair-accessible. In early 2017, there are plans to add an additional Mobile USO center and two large Sprinter vans to the USO’s mobile fleet. The new mobile center will serve where it’s needed. One Sprinter van will serve Alaska, while the other serves Texas.
9. OPERATION PHONE HOME®: Operation Phone Home® is one of the most frequently requested services from our forward-deployed service members. At our centers located in combat zones, service members use the USO’s private phone network to make free phone calls home, access computers with free, high-speed internet and free wireless internet for use with their own computers. More and more expectant fathers take advantage of free internet access to virtually accompany their wives in the delivery room for the birth of their children. In Southwest Asia alone, connectivity is the number one reason service members visit our centers. In 2016, 607,000 calls were placed by deployed service members – that is more than 5.7 million minutes of free talk time for service members to reconnect with their families. The USO also provided a total of 686,000 Wi-Fi sessions. In 2016, the USO deployed its first-ever mobile satellite kits with technology designed to enable service members to access a dedicated Wi-Fi connection at remote and isolated bases in combat and combat support areas where no USO locations exist. For the forward-deployed service members who served in remote areas without access to our centers last year, the USO provided 78,000 free international prepaid calling cards. To date, the USO has provided more than 3.3 million free prepaid international calling cards, allowing service members to connect with their loved ones back home. In other places around the world, many USO locations also offer free internet and free phone calls.
10. **MEGS:** Packaged in small, rugged containers, our Mobile Entertainment Gaming System (MEGS) provides entertainment options to service members in remote locations. Within minutes of opening a MEGS, service members are watching a movie or playing a video game. A tent is quickly transformed into a movie theater or game room – allowing those in harm's way a chance to relax and recharge. In 2016, 30 MEGS units supported 52 locations around the world and entertained more than 11,500 service members. Most have been sent to Afghanistan, but MEGS have also been sent to support units deployed to Australia, Guam, the Philippines and to U.S. Marines on embassy duty and shipped on a moment’s notice to support service members called to aid in emergency relief efforts.
11. **CARE PACKAGES:**  The USO Care Package Program is designed to provide service members with one of two different types of care packages – a Snack Pack or a Toiletry Pack. Both packs are desert tan in color and are constructed with a durable nylon material that has a Modular Lightweight Load-carrying Equipment, or MOLLE, system on the back of the pouch for attachment on most military-issued gear. The Snack Pack is assembled with a mixture of healthy treats, drink mixes and a collapsible water bottle. The Toiletry Pack comes equipped with a wide range of travel-sized hygiene products. ​
12. **HOLIDAY CARE PACKAGES:** USO Holiday Care Packages include decorations, snacks, DVDs and games to help service members serving in remote corners of the world celebrate American holidays. In 2016, the USO shipped 450 seasonal holiday care packages to help keep our deployed service members connected to home. This year, these themed boxes will continue to be delivered as our service members celebrate the holidays far from home. Expeditionary service members can also look forward to Super Bowl/Valentine’s Day/St. Patrick’s and the Summer boxes which will feature seasonal items to help them celebrate the holidays.
13. **UNITED THROUGH READING®:** One of the most powerful things we do is connect a separated parent with their children back home. In 2006, the USO partnered with United Through Reading® to host its nationally recognized reading program at select USO centers worldwide. Whether service members are stationed in Afghanistan or otherwise geographically separated, they can visit their participating USO center to read a story aloud to a special child – son, daughter, niece, nephew or even a younger sibling. Story time is recorded on video and the USO mails this priceless recording and book home. Children can watch and listen to their loved one at bedtime, naptime or anytime. Families complete the circle by sending back a touch of home – a photo of the child watching their loved one reading the book. In the 10 years the USO has provided United Through Reading in our centers, more than 340,000 stories have been read, recorded and sent home. In 2016, nearly 16,600 recordings were mailed to military families worldwide.

1. MILITARY FAMILIES
2. **STRONGER FAMILIES:**  The USO works with Stronger Families to bring OXYGEN For Your Relationship Seminars to military couples to help them strengthen their relationships while working on tough issues in a fun, nonthreatening environment. Couples learn to improve their communication, better understand each other’s needs, resolve conflict, rekindle romance and find renewed hope. The program is offered through three learning platforms: OXYGEN Seminars – a 1-2 day, 8-hour seminar that is customized to the attendee’s relationship needs as determined through a pre-assessment questionnaire; Taste of OXYGEN Events – a 60-90 minute presentation on relationship-strengthening topics selected by the installation hosting the event; and StrongerFamilies.com, an online platform that is free to all military couples. Oxygen365 offers a customized growth plan for couples that includes access to expert podcasts covering topics such as communication, conflict resolution, intimacy, finances and issues related to pre-deployment, deployment and reintegration. In 2016, more than 5,900 military attendees benefitted from 181 OXYGEN live learning events held across the country.

1. **COMFORT CREW FOR MILITARY KIDS:** The USO partners with the Comfort Crew for Military Kids to send award-winning motivational speakers on tour to promote self-confidence and resiliency in military children ages 6 to 15 years old. Military families tell us about the power and impact the tour has in helping military children tackle bullying in schools, adjust to life during and post-deployment and coping when a parent makes the ultimate sacrifice. Using innovative, inspiring and humorous stories, the WYATW tour has supported thousands of children. Annually, Trevor Romain and his crew embark on a multi-city tour providing presentations to military children living throughout the U.S.

Through the end of 2016, the USO has hosted the With You All the Way Tour! at 48 locations providing 220 opportunities for more than 35,000 military children to engage with the program. In total, Comfort Crew for Military Kids has reached more than 150,000 military children and civilian children and adults since the program’s inception.

1. **USO and THE what to expect Foundation present special delivery:** In August 2013, the USO launched a partnership with the What to Expect Foundation to host baby showers for military moms-to-be around the globe. Each shower includes a question and answer session with Heidi Murkoff, the best-selling author of the “What to Expect” book series and features traditional baby shower activities. The events are hosted by Murkoff in collaboration with a USO center and provide a touch of home for moms-to-be who are often away from their families, friends and support network while they are expecting. Since launching, the program has supported nearly 4,000 military spouses and expectant active-duty mothers. In 2016, 34 Special Delivery events – 24 showers, seven reunions and three father showers– were hosted by Murkoff, in collaboration with a USO center.
2. **SESAME STREET/USO EXPERIENCE:** The Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families, the longest-running entertainment tour in USO history, made its debut in July 2008. To date, the tour has taken its message to 589,508 service members and military families and performed 1,186 shows on 150 military installations in 33 states and 11 countries. Additionally, the tour has logged 218,057 miles and distributed more than 2.8 million giveaways. The 2016 tour performed 156 shows at 52 military bases in 23 states. Through our partnership with Sesame Workshop, the USO also supports military families by providing tools to help them adapt to many of life’s challenges. The USO offers an array of Sesame Workshop resource kits for children, distributing to USO centers and other military service agencies worldwide.
3. **USO OPERATION THAT’S MY DRESS:** Military teens, female service members and spouses experience unique challenges related to military life with frequent moves, deployments and adapting to new homes and communities. The Operation That’s My Dress experience is just one of the many ways the USO connects to service members and their families. The USO provides thousands of new gowns and dresses to teenage girls, female service members and spouses from international fashion designer Sherri Hill – among other notable designers in the fashion world – just in time for the homecoming and prom seasons, military balls and the holidays. Operation That’s My Dress begins with a fashion show, featuring professional models showcasing evening and formal wear by world-class designers and entertainment by the USO Show Troupe. The event also typically features a beauty bar with jewelry and fashion accessories for participants to get a completely accessorized look from head to toe. A dress expo, filled with hundreds of dress options, opens after the fashion show and models pair up with attendees to help them find the dress of their dreams. During the Dress Expo, stylists are on hand to provide hair and make-up demonstrations and consultations to give participants additional resources to help them feel confident and beautiful. In 2017, the USO will conduct three Operation That’s My Dress events in the U.S. One has already taken place outside of Austin, Texas, while the other two locations are still being determined.

1. TRANSITION

The need to support transitioning service members and their families is essential. The Joint Chiefs Chairman’s Office of Reintegration estimates more than 250,000 service members will transition into civilian communities each of the next three years, according to the Defense Department’s Transition to Veteran Program Office.

* + 1. **USO Transition Service Centers**

Located in Lakewood, Washington, USO Transition Services focuses on developing public, private and independent sector partnerships to reduce duplication, leverage resources, coordinate services and offering a purposeful pathway to services. Incorporating state-of-the-art technology, individuals will receive individual assistance navigating their personal and professional goals. USO transition programming provides a holistic approach and includes direct support, as well as unique and relevant programming developed with partner organizations.

In addition to the Center of Excellence located near Joint Base-Lewis McChord, Washington, the USO has also opened 13 additional USO Transition Service Centers across the United States:

* Lakewood, Washington
* Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington
* Fort Carson, Colorado
* Mount Carmel (Colorado Springs), Colorado
* Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada
* Fort Sill, Oklahoma
* Texas
	+ - Fort Bliss
		- Fort Hood
		- San Antonio
* Fort Campbell, Kentucky
* Fort Riley, Kansas
* Norfolk, Virginia
* Fort Drum, New York

Four more sites are scheduled to open in 2017 at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Fort Stewart, Georgia, and San Diego, with another six sites planned to open in the U.S. this year.

* + 1. **Partnership Programming**

USO Transition Services ensures all potential programmatic offerings align with the USO mission and transition programming, have a strong framework that can be scaled and implemented at each transition center, are vetted to ensure effectiveness for the individuals we serve, have clear and measurable outcomes and can demonstrate a return on investment.

All programs approved by USO Transition Services falls into one or a combination of the following components, providing a robust menu of options for transitioning military families across all domains.

1. One-on-one resource and program connections
2. Domain-specific workshops
3. Hiring events/networking opportunities
4. Connections to career skills training programs
5. Virtual employment assistance
6. Digital media libraries
7. Peer support groups and events
	* 1. **Partnership Highlights**

In addition to the network of local and national partners who provide services and resources, the USO continues its strategic partnership with Hiring Our Heroes to bring best-in-class, employment-related assistance to those we serve.

1. **HIRING OUR HEROES**, a program of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, is a nationwide initiative to help veterans, transitioning service members and military spouses find meaningful employment opportunities. The USO and Hiring Our Heroes will co-host 2-3 day transition summits at all installations across the country, which provide service members and spouses insight into industry trends, hiring practices and job search tools. The summits culminate in an afternoon-long hiring fair.

The summits are also opportunities for installation and unit leadership to get an overview of the importance of a transition plan for their service members, including the changing landscape of the transition process as well as how to become an advocate for these services when counseling their service members.

1. **WOUNDED, ILL AND INJURED SERVICE MEMBERS, THEIR FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS**

**USO Warrior and Family Centers**

The USO has three locations that primarily serve wounded, ill and injured service members, their families and caregivers, the first of which opened in 2003 in Germany. The USO Warrior Center at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC) in Germany provides a home away from home for wounded service members, many who visit multiple times daily between medical appointments. A wide spectrum of programs and activities are always available, but the most popular features among service members are the home-cooked meals and family-style cookouts.

The two additional locations operate in the Washington, D.C., metro area – the USO Warrior and Family Center located at Naval Support Activity Bethesda and the USO Warrior and Family Center at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. The facilities offer a comprehensive array of specialized services and programs in a supportive, homelike setting. The centers, created for our nation’s healing heroes and their families, feature classrooms, sports lounges, communal kitchen and eating areas, business centers, healing gardens and more.

**Hospital Outreach and Support**

Beyond our facilities near key military hospitals, additional support is provided through regional and traditional location operations. Outreach in Afghanistan and other areas of Southwest Asia range from uplifting community events to outfitting breakrooms for the military medical community. Further support is also provided in other key military hospital markets in the U.S. to include San Antonio’s monthly outreach dinners to build bonds with families and recovering service members.

**USO Warrior Week**

Bringing together various physical, therapeutic and recreational organizations from across the country that focus on the rehabilitation of wounded service members, USO Warrior Week is the only event of its kind. Each year, more than 500 wounded service members and their families participate in various activities including deep-sea fishing, golfing, horseback riding, kayaking, water skiing, surfing and skydiving. The event is designed to bring all levels of skills and interest together in one location, while building resiliency and creating a lasting family memory for all attendees.

1. **FAMILIES OF THE FALLEN**

The USO has supported every dignified transfer at Delaware’s Dover Air Force Base since March 1991. USO centers are located in the heart of Dover Air Force Base to support families of the fallen, as well as those service members assigned to the Air Force Mortuary Affairs complex. Additionally, as family notifications occur at all times of the day and night, the USO works 24/7 to coordinate with USO centers across the country. The USO is there to support and comfort families who have just received tragic news as they travel to and from Dover. The USO’s reach expands beyond Dover with a vast network of support for our families of the fallen from coast to coast.

The USO also supports the families of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice through our partnerships with organizations like the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) and Fisher House, as well as the support received at various USO centers across the United States. The USO and TAPS also provide Survivor Resource Kits to newly bereaved family members. Filled with comfort items, books of support, personal notes and information, these kits provide a warm embrace in the form of a carefully crafted package. Each kit is carefully tailored to the specific family’s circumstance of loss, relationship to the deceased, cause of death and other family needs that are shared with us. For our nation’s smallest heroes, the USO supports TAPS Good Grief Camps, TAPS Kids Campouts, Adult Retreats and the Annual Suicide Survivor Conference. The camps provide a safe atmosphere for children to connect with others coping with similar feelings, helping them to establish a support system. No matter what the hour or the need, the USO is there for the families of the fallen.

1. **ENTERTAINMENT ACTIVITIES**

The USO is probably best known for entertainment tours that bring celebrities and performers who donate their time and talents to visit our service members and families wherever they serve. In 2016, the USO deployed 68 celebrity entertainers on 31 tours to 22 countries and 27 states, and entertained 117,543 service members and military families. Eight of these tours were to a combat zone. The Sesame Street/USO Experience for Military Families tour kicked off in May featuring shows centered around the transition from military to civilian life as well as moving. The 2016 tour performed 156 shows at 52 military bases in 23 states.

The USO Show Troupe, managed directly by the USO, entertains approximately 200,000 service members and their families annually as well as nationally televised audiences. The Show Troupe presents top of the line entertainment with performers possessing extensive Broadway, off-Broadway, film and TV credits. Performances include deployment, homecoming and family appreciation events, commissionings, christenings, retirement and change of commands at venues such as military hospitals, veterans homes, VFWs, American Legions, parades, fleet weeks and air shows around the world.

1. **Providing Resources for USO Programs and Services**

We often hear from people who say they want to give back to our nation’s service members, but they don’t know how to get involved. The USO provides a variety of ways to show support and appreciation for our military heroes and helps make a difference in their lives. Individuals, corporations or organizations can find creative ways to give at [www.USOWishbook.org](http://www.USOWishbook.org), choosing from the virtual gift catalog. Americans can also visit [www.uso.org](http://www.uso.org)/force to learn how they can join Force Behind the Forces by making an online donation, sending a message of support to our service men and women or by finding a local USO to learn more.

1. **USO WISHBOOK:** Found at [USOWishbook.org](http://USOWISHBOOK.org), this online alternative giving catalog offers donors a way to support the USO by purchasing symbolic gifts for friends and loved ones that help America’s service members and their families. Since the launch of USO Wishbook in 2011, more than $4 million has been raised to support our nation’s military community, which translates almost more than 100,000 gifts purchased. The most popular gifts are Phone Calls Home, Comfort Food Package, and Long Distance Bedtime Stories. Throughout the year, individual gifts and packages are added in honor of special gift giving occasions.USO Wishbook leverages print and corporate partnership integrations to grow this online giving opportunity and continue to give Americans a way to support our service members and their families in a fun, creative and simple way.
* USO meets all 20 Better Business Bureau Standards for Charity Accountability and is a gold-level GuideStar Exchange participant, demonstrating its commitment to transparency.

**To learn more about the USO and how we serve our service members and their families, visit us at:**

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