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## **\*PRESS RELEASE\***

### **“Armed Forces Foundation Honors America’s Heroes With Tribute Event”**

*Congressional Gala Raises Funds & Awareness To Benefit Members of the Military Community*

**WASHINGTON, DC / March 18, 2009** – Members of Congress, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Department of Defense officials honored nearly 200 wounded service members from Walter Reed Army Hospital, Bethesda National Naval Medical Center, and H.H. McGuire VA Medical Center on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009, at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Armed Forces Foundation (AFF) Congressional Gala. Overall, the event raised nearly one million dollars. For the third year in a row, General Dynamics was the event’s largest sponsor. The gala took place at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center and was hosted by **Congressman C.W. Bill Young** (Ranking Member, House Subcommittee on Defense Appropriations), **Senator John McCain** (Ranking Member, Senate Armed Services Committee), **Congressman Duncan D. Hunter** (Member, House Armed Services Committee), **Congressman Gene Taylor** (Chairman, House Subcommittee on Sea Power and Expeditionary Forces), and **Senator Daniel K. Inouye** (Chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee). The Gala honored individuals for their outstanding contributions to the military, including Admiral Eric T. Olson (Commander of United States Special Operations Command, and Mr. Dana White, (President and CEO of the Ultimate Fighting Championship).

“Tonight we are celebrating men and women that have demonstrated their support to our troops in unique and extraordinary ways,” said Patricia Driscoll, President of the Armed Forces Foundation. “The Armed Forces Foundation is honored to recognize our heroes and their supporters for all of the work that they do for us.”

The AFF awarded the *Bill and Beverly Young Humanitarian of the Year Award* to Admiral Eric T. Olson. Throughout his career Admiral Olson has served with great strength, compassion and patriotism; he is a wonderful embodiment of what it means to represent this country as a member of the Armed Forces. Through his service to his country and to his brothers in arms, he leads by example.

The night’s second award honored Mr. Dana White, president of the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) for his and his company’s dedication to the welfare of our men and women. The AFF awarded Mr. White the *Sheldon Adelson Patriot Award* for humanitarianism in industry. The UFC has been a national leader in raising money for research and development in the field of Traumatic Brain Injury, one of AFF’s focuses as a nonprofit.

In conjunction with the Gala, comedian Ron White performed a benefit show on Sunday March 15. Mr. White performed with comedians Dave Attell, Kathleen Madigan, Alex Reymundo, Drew Hastings, and Pat Dixon for a night of comedy and charity. All proceeds from the show went to benefit the Armed Forces Foundation.

Reaffirming their support for our nation’s troops and families, corporate sponsors General Dynamics Corporation, Boeing, Northrop Grumman, AM General, Cubic Corporation, TriWest Healthcare and the Issa Family Foundation all provided sizable donations. As a result of the overwhelming support of the corporate community the Gala served as one of the most successful tribute events in the Foundation’s history.

## **About the Armed Forces Foundation**

In 2001 the Armed Forces Foundation (AFF) was established as a 501(c)(3) organization under the U.S. Department of Defense's *America Supports You* program. AFF offers vital assistance to active-duty and retired personnel, National Guard, Reserve Components and military families as they cope with difficult circumstances. Through a multitude of programs the Armed Forces Foundation assists military families with utilities and rent; hotel and travel costs; holiday gifts for military children; and therapeutic recreational activities. The Armed Forces Foundation has been recognized by the President of the United States, the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of Education and the Department of Energy for its dedication to America's Service Members. For more information on our Foundation or to aid us in our mission please visit us at our website [www.armedforcesfoundation.org](http://www.armedforcesfoundation.org).