

First Lady Diana Rauner announces “Cards for Heroes” military holiday card drive

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SPRINGFIELD – First Lady Diana Rauner today announced the 2017 Holiday Card Drive for the Military. Done in partnership with the United Service Organizations (USO) of Illinois, the Illinois Department of Veterans’ Affairs, and the Illinois Executive Mansion Association, the drive aims to send Illinois’ brave service men and women overseas the simple joy of knowing that people back home are thinking of them at holiday time.

"We must always remember our Illinois Heroes, the people who serve in harm's way and sacrifice so much to preserve our way of life," Mrs. Rauner said. "A card is a simple gift that can lift their spirits and remind our service members that we're thinking of them while they're far from home."

"Governor Rauner and I encourage all Illinoisans to send holiday cards to the USO. In turn, the USO will see to it that our expressions of gratitude and admiration are delivered in time for the holiday."

Holiday cards should be mailed now through November 20th to the following address:

USO of Illinois – Cards for Heroes
333 S. Wabash Ave., 16th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604

Cards can also be dropped off at a local Illinois Department of Veterans’ Affairs Veteran Service Office. Office locations can be found here: www.illinois.gov/veterans.

"We are thrilled to partner with Governor Rauner and the State of Illinois to help bring messages of cheer and good will to our troops and their families, whether they reside in Illinois, are passing through or are stationed or deployed overseas," said Alison Ruble, the President and CEO of the USO of Illinois. "Now, more than ever, it's important that we let our military and their families know that their service to our nation is

remembered and appreciated. These cards of support will help do just that, and the USO of Illinois is honored to be the bridge of connection that delivers these messages."

Maj. Gen. Richard J. Hayes Jr., the Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard and Director of the Illinois Department of Military Affairs, thanked the USO of Illinois for its support of his Soldiers and Airmen.

"I have seen first-hand the positive impact the USO of Illinois has had by always being there for our service men and women, as well as their families," said Hayes. "These holiday cards are just one example of how their support, as well as the support of our fellow Illinoisans, helps bring a little bit of home to our Soldiers and Airmen as they continue to serve overseas."

With service members serving throughout the world, including many remote locations, and the additional holiday mail, it is important to send holiday cards and gifts to service members as early as possible to ensure they arrive before the holidays.