



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTACT: Ben Becker
(202) 414-0781
bbecker@susandavis.com

NEWS RELEASE

**LOCAL *AMERICA SUPPORTS YOU* HOMEFRONT GROUP MEETS
WITH PRESIDENT BUSH AT THE WHITE HOUSE**

President Thanks Groups for Their Support of Troops and Families

WASHINGTON—**Brian Bohlman** of **Operation Thank You**, a Columbia-based organization, was one of 10 *America Supports You* Homefront groups invited by President George W. Bush to a private meeting at the White House today to discuss the importance of his work, and to thank him for his organization's support of the military at home and abroad.

Operation Thank You is working towards the goal of sending 150,000 thank-you and get-well cards to deployed and wounded troops. Bohlman, the group's founder, has been a member of the Armed Forces since 1992 and currently serves as a chaplain in the Air National Guard. Operation Thank You also recently created a DVD of support messages for the troops to provide encouragement from the home front.

"It was an honor for me to be invited to the White House for this important meeting with President Bush," said Bohlman. "He recognized how important our work on behalf of our men and women in uniform is, and that this nationwide support is critical to their morale. Recognition of this magnitude fuels our passion to let service members across the world know how much America supports them and to continue providing ways the American people can show their support."



Brian Bohlman (fourth from right) and representatives from other *America Supports You* homefront organizations receive a tour of the Oval Office from President Bush today. (AP Photo/Charles Dharapak)

“There are some remarkable acts of kindness by people who have taken it upon themselves to serve their country by helping a neighbor in need,” said President Bush of the groups’ work. “Whether it be helping the chaplains help kids, or whether it be helping a family of the injured, whether it be working at Walter Reed or supporting troops getting ready to go into combat, these good men and women really represent the very best of America...I’m proud to be the President of a country with so many decent citizens.”

“I ask my fellow citizens to support our troops and their families. There are all kinds of ways you can find out how to do so,” President Bush added. “AmericaSupportsYou.mil, for example, is a Web site that if you really do want to participate like these citizens have, that you can find a way to contribute your time or your money, your talents, to really send a message that America supports these brave volunteers who are out defending their country in the war on terror.”

About America Supports You:

America Supports You is an ongoing nationwide program that helps showcase American’s support for the men and women of the Armed Forces. Since its launch in November of 2004 by the Department of Defense, *America Supports You* has welcomed nearly 250 homefront groups and more than 30 corporate sponsors. Many *America Supports You* homefront groups support the troops by writing letters, sending care packages, helping the wounded when they return home, assisting military families,



sending e-mails or simply extending kind gestures to the troops. To learn more about how you can support military personnel please visit www.AmericaSupportsYou.mil.

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*Media Notes: For more information or to arrange for an interview with **Brian Bohlman**, contact **Ben Becker** at (202) 414-0781 or at bbecker@susandavis.com.*

Meeting Participants:

Major Brian Bohlman, Founder and President
Operation Thank You (Lexington, South Carolina)
www.OperationThankYou.org

Jill Boyce, President
Deployed Soldier's Family Foundation (Plano, Texas)

Sergeant Ray Clifford, USAF (Ret), Executive Director
Coalition to Salute America's Heroes (Croton-on-Hudson, New York)

Julie DeMaria, Co-Founder and Director
Operation Care and Comfort (San Jose, California)

Karen Grimord, Founder and President
Landstuhl Hospital Care Project (Stafford, Virginia)

Daniel Hoebeke, Director
Adopt-A-Chaplain (San Jose, California)

Cindy McGrew, Founder and President
Operation Second Chance (Clarksburg, Maryland)

Amy Oxford, Co-Coordinator
Southern Illinois "SI" Yellow Ribbon (Harrisburg, Illinois)

Karen Theobald-Conlin, President
Helping our Heroes Foundation (Potomac Falls, Virginia)

Gail Van Vranken, Founder and President
Boatsie's Boxes (Wheeling, West Virginia)