



VFW Free Calls Home for Deployed Troops Surpass 3 Million

August 15, 2009 • VFW National Military Services Update

The VFW is pleased to announce it has now provided more than three million free phone calls between deployed service members and their families back home in the United States, courtesy of *VFW Operation Uplink*™ "Free Call Days".

VFW Operation Uplink™ - the premiere calling program for deployed service members - initially provided calling cards to deployed and hospitalized troops, but on Mother's Day 2006, due to the growing popularity of the program and thanks to the generosity of corporate donors like Sport Clips and UAW-GM, the program began hosting Free Call Days.



At least one designated day each month, deployed service members making calls to the U.S. from their local Morale Welfare & Recreation (MWR) center are greeted by a recording stating their call will be free courtesy of *VFW Operation Uplink*™. The program began working through 191 internet cafes abroad and is now offered through more than 866 locations.

CPT Shawn Bailey, Jalalabad, Afghanistan, FOB Fenty, says of the program, "I am so grateful for the ability to hear my wife and my 8-month-old over the phone. Your service is crucially important for the morale of the soldiers. You are doing your country an immeasurable service by ensuring the communication of military families!"

"The fact that we have reached the three million mark in such a relatively short time is a remarkable testament to the generosity and genuine support that our VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary members, as well as the American public have for today's military service members. It also speaks volumes about the importance of maintaining the connection between our service members and their loved ones. The VFW is extremely proud that we've been able to act as a conduit by helping to provide these free phone calls home," says VFW Adjutant General, Allen "Gunner" Kent.

The next **VFW Operation Uplink™** Free Call Day will be held on August 16, 2009, courtesy of Burger King.

VFW Operation Uplink™ works exclusively with DRS Technical Services, Inc. to provide the Free Call Day program - the only program of its kind. Corporations or individuals interested in donating to the program or sponsoring a Free Call Day are encouraged to contact Linda Ferguson of VFW National Military Services at 816-968-1102 or lferguson@vfw.org.

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National Military Services is a department of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW). If you have questions about this Update, please contact Michael Penney, National Military Services Director, at mpenney@vfw.org or 816-756-3390.

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