

UAW, VFW Team Up to Aid Military Families

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DETROIT — On Dec. 11, 2007 the UAW presented a donation of \$15,000 to the VFW to support *Operation Uplink*, a program which provides free phone cards to members of the U.S. Armed Forces stationed overseas so they can stay in touch with their families during their terms of military service.

“We're proud to provide assistance to military families,” said UAW Vice President Cal Rapson, who directs the union's Veterans Affairs Department. “The men and women of the U.S. armed forces make great sacrifices on behalf of our country, and their families sacrifice as well during their absence. It's good to know that with the help of the VFW, we can provide some assistance to help families stay in touch, especially during the holiday season.”

In receiving the check from Rapson, Sherwood H. Pea, VFW Michigan state commander and a member of UAW Local 651 said, “We always know we can count on the UAW. This donation for *Operation Uplink* is just another example of how UAW members have been generous in every way possible in their support for military families and veterans”

This is not the first time the UAW has stepped up assist the VFW in serving veterans and their families. In 2006, donations from UAW members across the country helped construct a \$400,000 duplex to help house single-parent families at the VFW National Home for Children in Eaton Rapids, Mich.

The generous donation to VFW *Operation Uplink* came from the UAW National Staff Council sponsored annual golf tournament, which raised \$20,000 at its June 2007 event. After donating \$5,000 to the VFW National Home for Children, staff council members selected *Operation Uplink* to be the recipient of the remaining \$15,000.

UAW Staff Council President John Grimes praised UAW’s fundraising efforts and said, “By their support of the mission of the VFW National Home for Children and *Operation Uplink* our members continue to demonstrate their support of the families of those who have served and those serving in harms way today in defense of our freedom. The UAW staff council is proud we can play this small role in the lives of veterans and their families.”

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"This union is never going to forget those who are actively serving our country or our veterans," said Rapson. "We're going to continue to help in any way we can."