

# USAA Helps Connect Soldiers and Families on Veterans Day

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**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** — On Veterans Day, in honor of all the brave American's who have selflessly defended our country, deployed U.S. servicemen and women were able to call their loved ones back home at no cost, thanks to financial services provider USAA.

USAA teamed up with VFW to provide more than 70,000 connections to the United States from abroad, totaling nearly 1 million minutes of free talk time through the VFW Operation Uplink™ program. In addition, USAA's generous sponsorship includes the purchase and distribution of more than 3,000 international calling cards to military chaplains overseas.

“At USAA, we're in direct contact with thousands of military members every day, and we hear firsthand the family and household challenges they face. It's our privilege to support the VFW's Operation Uplink, which gives them an opportunity to hear their loved ones' voices, helping ease the burden of separation that military service often requires,” said retired Rear Adm. John Townes, USAA vice president of military affairs. “As we expand our business to serve many more military veterans, we look forward to additional opportunities to work with the VFW to help those who serve our nation as well as those who have served.”

USAA, founded by military officers in 1922, recently expanded its eligibility to include all honorably discharged veterans – officer and enlisted – from all branches of the U.S. Armed Services, regardless of years of service. USAA offers banking, investment, insurance and financial planning products and services to more than seven million members of the military and their families.

First Lt. Philip Dudley, a soldier stationed in Baghdad, Iraq said of the Veterans Day Free Call Day, “I want to thank you for your support of service members. Today my team was able to place free calls from Baghdad to our families in the states. Being on a very small base means calls can get expensive. Having the opportunity to make free calls to our loved ones meant the world to my team and I. Thank you very much for that opportunity. Your support of veterans and deployed soldiers is always greatly appreciated by those who have served, those who are serving and those who have stood by us through it all. Thank you.”

Chaplain (Capt.) Pat Opp at Forward Operating Base Leatherneck, Afghanistan is one of

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many deployed chaplains to receive the free phone cards made possible by USAA.

“Thank you for your generosity for our Joes. That is just great! I will serve them out to troops who need them and do my best to protect them. As a chaplain, I do my best to not only check on morale but also stimulate it in a positive way. Phone cards certainly help!”

**VFW Operation Uplink™** “Free Call Days,” launched in 2006, have provided more than 3 million free connections between deployed service members and their loved ones in the United States.