

VFW Operation Uplink 'Free Call Day' Program Tops 7 Million Connections

The program allows overseas service members to call home at no cost

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The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) proudly announces its Operation Uplink™ “Free Call Day” program recently surpassed 7 million connections from deployed military personnel to their loved ones at home. The program hosts Free Call Days for service members serving in Afghanistan and Kuwait, as well as hospitalized veterans, giving them the opportunity to call family and friends in the United States at no cost.

The program will also expand in 2013 when it begins providing three designated Free Call Days each month, more than ever before. Sport Clips Haircuts, a longtime supporter of the program through its annual “Help A Hero” fundraising campaign, made the expansion possible with a \$500,000 donation to the program in December. The donation was the single largest in Operation Uplink’s history. Sport Clips has donated almost \$2 million to the program since 2007.

“The VFW is proud of Operation Uplink because it makes such a difference in the lives of our active-duty military. Being able to talk to your loved ones free of charge while you’re thousands of miles away from your home is a precious gift,” says VFW Commander-in-Chief John Hamilton, a Vietnam veteran.

Free Call Days are available at more than 600 Morale, Welfare and Recreation center Internet cafés using SPAWAR. Service members use their regular SPAWAR prepaid PIN number and then follow normal dialing procedures. If they don’t have a PIN, the café manager can issue them one on the Free Call Day. A sponsor message greets the caller before the call is placed to inform them the call is at no charge, and they are free to talk as long as they are able.

Operation Uplink began in 1996, initially providing calling cards to deployed and hospitalized troops. On Mother's Day 2006, due to the growing popularity of the program

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and thanks to the generosity of corporate donors like Sport Clips, the program began hosting Free Call Days.

To learn more about the Operation Uplink Free Call Day program, including the 2013 Free Call Day schedule, [click here](#).