

Gold Star Awareness Campaign Guidance for PAOs & Editors

Background:

The Army Survivor Outreach Services office, part of the Installation Management Command's G9 Family and MWR Programs Division, is launching a campaign to increase awareness of the significance of Gold Star Pins.

Gold Star Pins are generally presented at a military funeral to the Family members of service members who have died on active duty. Focus groups with survivors have indicated the need for an awareness campaign to help the American public recognize-- and understand the significance-- of the pins.

IMCOM G9 contracted with Aperture Films to produce three broadcast-quality PSAs to be shared with broadcast and cable networks.

IMCOM has also leveraged an existing relationship with Fox Sports and launched the awareness campaign on one of the largest television viewing days of the year; Super Bowl Sunday. Phase II of the campaign takes place during Memorial Day weekend, where survivors wearing the pins will take place in numerous special events throughout the national capital region.

Public Affairs Posture is ACTIVE.

The effectiveness of the awareness campaign depends on the support of garrison public affairs and marketing offices.

During Phase II of the awareness campaign, which launches the week of Memorial Day, survivors and representatives from the Installation Management Command will travel by motorcycle to the District of Columbia as part of the annual Run for the Wall motorcycle rally.

The Run for the Wall is an American Motorcycle Association-sanctioned event in which thousands of bikers ride from California to the Pentagon to raise awareness about prisoners of war and service members missing in action. The IMCOM team will represent Survivors at each stop in the event, and will host a booth in the Pentagon parking lot prior to the annual "Rolling Thunder" motorcycle event, which travels from the Pentagon to the Vietnam Memorial. The PSA will be shared at each stop along the way.\

Phase II of the awareness campaign includes an extensive outreach effort through social media as survivors of the fallen take part in a number of events taking place in the D.C.-area, including the wreath-laying at Arlington National Cemetery, the concert on the Mall, and the Washington Nationals game, where the PSA will be aired both on the jumbotron during the game and on Fox Sports during their broadcast of the game.

Gold Star Family members will also take part in the Canadian Memorial Dedication Ceremony, events at Mount Vernon and the Vietnam Memorial, the Memorial Day Parade, and the concert on the lawn.

Finally, program managers and survivors across America are calling on their elected officials to include mention of the stars, and their meaning, in any Memorial Day events they might be taking part in at their home towns, districts or states.

Garrison PAOs are expected to:

- 1) Share the PSAs with their local news and network contacts
- 2) Print IMCOM-produced articles supporting the campaign in garrison newspapers.
- 3) Echo command messages about SOS and the pins in their social media networks
- 4) Place the PSAs, or links to the PSAs, on their garrison websites (GoldStarPins.org)
- 5) Seek out local survivor stories and opportunities to tell the Gold Star story
- 6) Facilitate interviews between local media and survivors, if appropriate/required

Garrison MWR and SOS offices are expected to:

- 1) Train selected personnel on the garrison about the existence and significance of the pins, IAW IMCOM OPORD 113-084
- 2) Assist the garrison PAO by identifying and facilitating interviews with Gold Star families
- 3) Echo command messages about SOS and the pins in their social media networks
- 4) Place the PSAs, or links to the PSAs, on their garrison websites (GoldStarPins.org)
- 5) Coordinate with the garrison PAO to include SOS and Gold Star families in local community events.

Talking Points and Messages are attached.

Potential Q&As are attached.

Media Queries outside the scope of this guidance may be referred to:

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