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**HIGH SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS, AMERICAN LEGION
HELP CSAH SEND WOUNDED VETERANS
EXTRA COURSE OF CELEBRATION FOR THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**

WILTON, CT – November 30, 2012. Thanks to the efforts of two Keller (Texas) High School students and The American Legion, nearly 3,000 veterans who were wounded in Afghanistan or Iraq enjoyed an extra course of joy and celebration this past Thanksgiving holiday.

Karlei Summerford and Taylor Lovera, 17-year-old seniors at Keller, were among the small contingent of volunteers who recently helped the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes (CSAH) distribute about \$180,000 in Thanksgiving *Thank You Meal* gift checks to veterans of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) whose combat-related injuries and illnesses have contributed to the financial hardship they and their families are experiencing.

Working as a team, Summerford and Lovera mailed about 1,000 of the *Thank You Meal* gift checks; the American Legion distributed the balance.

Aside from a \$60 check, each individual received a personalized *Thank You and Get Well* card signed by one of CSAH's donors, as well as a letter from President and Chief Executive Officer, David Walker, who called the gift package a "means to convey our donors' appreciation for the sacrifices made when you put on our country's uniform to defend America."

"We're extremely grateful to Karlei and Taylor for helping us reach the many deserving recipients of these gift checks," said Walker. "Their efforts meant these brave individuals were able to observe the best traditions of the Thanksgiving holiday with their families."

Walker also acknowledged the Legion for the three consecutive years it has helped distribute the checks, stating that CSAH is "privileged to partner with such a great American institution on this worthy and important initiative."

In the last four years, the CSAH has distributed over 10,500 gift checks for the Thanksgiving *Thank You Meal* program, the funds for which come from charitable contributions made by its supporters.

"Our donors vigorously support the programs we have in place to recognize the sacrifices these brave men and women made defending our freedoms, and to help them rebuild their lives," he said. "What better time to do that than on Thanksgiving?"

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Since it was founded in 2004, the CSAH has provided severely wounded OEF and OIF veterans and their families with over 27,000 emergency aid payments, grants, holiday and *Thank You Meal* gift checks, and other services

CSAH is a 501(c)(3), non-profit non-partisan organization. All funds needed to develop and manage programs that advance its mission come from contributions made to CSAH by individual citizens, corporate donors and foundations.

For more information, visit www.saluteheroes.org.