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America Supports You: Spurs Host Military at NBA Game

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 25, 2005 – It's not the same as a hug, but it is the next best thing to being there.

The Freedom Calls Foundation will link 75 family members from Texas with their deployed loved ones deployed to Taji, Iraq, via video conference prior to tonight's Atlanta Hawks - San Antonio Spurs National Basketball Association game in San Antonio.

Freedom Calls is part of the "America Supports You" team, a Defense Department effort to recognize citizens' support for the men and women of the armed forces and to communicate that support to service members at home and abroad.

The video calls are part of the Spurs Military Appreciation Night. Skybox holders have donated their seats to military personnel stationed and convalescing in San Antonio.

Freedom Calls Foundation connects deployed troops and families free of charge. The foundation has services and equipment in military hospitals and bases around the globe. They unite separated families by allowing service members to remotely attend graduations and other important family milestones, as well as see their newborn babies and families. The foundation will be linking families with loved ones throughout the Easter weekend.

The Spurs have held a Military Appreciation Night for many years. San Antonio is the "Gateway to the Air Force," with Lackland Air Force Base serving as the basic training site for all airmen. Fort Sam Houston and Brooke Army Medical Center are also in the south-central Texas community.

Spurs officials say ticket holders will donate nearly 500 of their suite and front-row seats for the game to wounded U.S. military personnel and the families of fallen service members, who also will get free food and drinks.

Families wishing to connect with deployed loved ones should contact the Freedom Calls Foundation by e-mail at ebukstel@freedomcalls.org.

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