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## **FIRST LADY MICHELLE OBAMA AND DR. JILL BIDEN ASK AMERICANS TO SUPPORT MILITARY FAMILIES IN NEW PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

**PSA Developed With Support From  
Major League Baseball and its Welcome Back Veterans Program**

**Part of A New Volunteer Initiative Called "I Participate"  
Led By The Entertainment Industry Foundation**

September 11, 2009 (Los Angeles, CA) – First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden appear in a new Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF) public service announcement that praises the contributions of military servicemen and women while asking Americans to assist veterans and military families who need help. The PSA is scheduled to premiere in Major League Baseball stadiums across the country today as part of its Welcome Back Veterans initiative, and will air on major broadcast networks starting this fall.

The PSA featuring the First Lady and Dr. Biden is the first in a series created by EIF as part of its newly launched "I Participate" initiative designed to inspire a new era of volunteerism and community work in America. As a centerpiece of this multiyear campaign, the major broadcast networks – ABC, CBS, FOX and NBC – and others will include the theme of service in programming in more than 60 shows for the full week of October 19 -25.

"I've made it a personal priority to ask all Americans to join me in the cause of supporting our military families," said Mrs. Obama. "We must all remember that when our troops are deployed, their families are left behind with a completely different set of duties. Let us make a pledge to honor their service and their sacrifice by doing more to serve them in our own communities. Whether it's just being a good neighbor or it's volunteering at a local organization that supports military families, please join us in taking the time to honor those who sacrifice for all of us."

"As the mother of a National Guardsman who is serving in Iraq, this is personal," said Dr. Biden. "I share the concerns, the anxieties, and the pride that come with being a member of a military family, and I have also seen first-hand what a difference it makes when people reach out to show support, whether in school, in the neighborhood, or in the workplace. Each of us has the power to make a difference in the life of a service member or his or her family."



In April, President Obama signed the bi-partisan Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act which recognizes September 11 as a National Day of Service and Remembrance and reauthorizes the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the Federal agency that oversees the Administration's call to service. The bill also represents the largest expansion of federal support for service in history, bringing critical new resources to national service programs, volunteer management efforts and social innovation.

Each of EIF's PSAs will highlight one of five key areas where volunteers are needed most: support for military families; wellness; community health; financial security; and environmental conservation; all were directed by Jesse Dylan. The PSAs include information about [www.iparticipate.org](http://www.iparticipate.org) which is designed to make it easy for people to search for volunteer opportunities in their communities and discover new ways to give back. The website features include calendars of events, maps, digital tool kits and uses the power of social networking vehicles like Facebook, making it easy for people to join the movement and recruit friends. Information about the programs can also be found at [welcomebackveterans.org](http://welcomebackveterans.org) and [serve.gov](http://serve.gov).

"With the collective impact of the parties involved in I Participate, we are confident this important initiative will make a significant impact," said Baseball Commissioner Allan H. (Bud) Selig. "Welcome Back Veterans has been an important program for Major League Baseball over the past two seasons and, by becoming a major part of I Participate, we expect the program to significantly address the post traumatic stress needs of veterans and their families."

The number of Americans who volunteer regularly has not increased in 40 years and has generally remained around 26%, according to an annual survey conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. While volunteerism usually declines during periods of economic distress, volunteerism is currently on the rise in America, particularly among young people, according to the CNCS.

"As an industry of storytellers who shape popular culture through film, television and music, we have a unique opportunity to bring service to the fore of American consciousness," said Lisa Paulsen, President and CEO of EIF. "We are so honored to have Mrs. Obama and Dr. Biden appear in this important PSA about how we can assist our military men and women and their families."

### **About CNCS and Serve.gov**

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. Each year, the Corporation engages four million Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America programs. [Serve.gov](http://Serve.gov) is managed by the [Corporation for National and Community Service](http://Corporation for National and Community Service) and is an online resource for finding volunteer opportunities and creating new ones in communities around the country.



**About Major League Baseball / Welcome Back Veterans**

Launched by Major League Baseball and envisioned by New York Mets Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Fred Wilpon, Welcome Back Veterans was designed to support veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and their families with mental health treatment and job opportunities. Major League Baseball, in partnership with the McCormick Foundation, has raised money through auctions on MLB.com, sales of special stars and stripes logoed caps that have been worn by all 30 clubs, and other fund raising activities. Welcome Back Veterans has awarded \$5.8 million in grants to 24 non-profit agencies providing service and assistance to returning veterans. Visit [www.welcomebackveterans.org](http://www.welcomebackveterans.org).

**About the Entertainment Industry Foundation**

The Entertainment Industry Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, is the leading charitable organization of entertainment industry, and has distributed hundreds of millions of dollars to support programs addressing critical health, education and social issues. Visit [www.eifoundation.org](http://www.eifoundation.org).

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