

Anthony Kearns Sings to a Sell-Out Crowd at New Zealand Embassy Gala for the USO and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund

WASHINGTON, Nov. 2, 2011 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- On October 20, the Embassy of New Zealand hosted its second-annual musical tribute to America's armed forces, featuring world-renowned tenor Anthony Kearns, hosted by the ONE Campaign. The reception, "A Special Musical Tribute: US Military members, Their Families and Their Legacies," honoured two of the nation's premier military charities, the USO of Metropolitan Washington and the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Fund.

New Zealand Ambassador Michael Moore commented, "The Embassy was delighted to host this musical tribute with the ONE Campaign for two noble American military causes—the USO and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. We're so pleased that the talented Anthony Kearns was able to return for an evening of music in support of America's military families. I could not have imagined a more perfect evening."

Mr. Kearns said, "It was an honour to perform for these two wonderful military causes and the guests of the New Zealand Embassy. We had yet another grand event and I was pleased to do my part to support America's military men and women who make it safe for us to live in peace around the globe." During the program, Kearns dedicated "Ave Maria" by composer Charles Gounod to members of the U.S. military and their families.

"We're so thankful to the New Zealand Embassy and the ONE Campaign for hosting this charity benefit for military families for the second year in a row," said Elaine Rogers, president of the USO of Metropolitan Washington. "We recognize their efforts and thank them for helping us continue in our mission to make a difference in the lives and memories of local active duty service members and their families."

"I've heard the sensational Anthony Kearns perform many times, and I'm pleased he could once again join us in a tribute to two great military causes, both of which are near and dear to my heart," said USO National Board Member Bob Martinez, a Vietnam Veteran and producer of "The Long Way Home" video series.

Martinez said he was touched by Kearns' rendition of "Empty Chairs at Empty Tables" from Les Miserables, which was a "poignant homage to America's Vietnam War veterans, including those left behind as prisoners of war or who are still missing in action."

"We are so impressed by the enthusiasm and the generosity of The New Zealand Embassy and the ONE Campaign in making this such a wonderful event. With their support, we are steps closer to building the Education Centre at The Wall so that the stories of all who served and sacrificed during the Vietnam War will never be forgotten," said VVFM Founder and President Jan Scruggs.

During the program, Mr. Kearns performed the beautiful Maori song, "Pokarekare Ana." He and his accompanist, Patrick Healy, performed an eclectic mix of songs that also included Irish ballads such as: "Red is the Rose," "Kitty of Coleraine," "Kitty Me Love," and "Danny Boy." Other classics included "On Wings of Song," "Mattinata," and "Roses of Picardy," a famous ballad of World War I, written by Frederic Weatherly and set to music by Haydn Wood. Kearns also performed "I'll Walk Beside You" by composer Alan Murray, "God Bless America," and "I'll Be Seeing You," as the grand finale of the concert.

The USO and the VVMF are 501(c)(3), not-for-profit organizations.

NOTE: To schedule a media interview or special engagement with Mr. Kearns, please contact Kirsten Fedewa at 202.365.6936 or Kirsten@fedewaconsulting.com. For information about the USO of Metropolitan Washington, contact Crystal Benton at 703.694.4839 or visit www.usometro.org. For information about the VVMF, contact Lee Allen at 202-393-0090, ext. 109 or orlallen@vvmf.org.