



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The USO Celebrates and Commemorates Juneteenth

Statement from USO CEO and President J.D. Crouch II

“A defining part of our core USO values is respect – respect for one another, respect for our military, and respect for our country. Racial injustice is completely counter to this core value and I condemn it. There simply is no place for racism in our great Nation.

Ever since the USO ‘opened its doors’ on February 4, 1941, it has been a place of refuge for *all* American service members and their families. The USO and its employees and volunteers have been there to support our troops, on behalf of a grateful Nation, no matter their race, gender, or background. And so it shall remain.

We know that there is more to do to and more to learn to meaningfully address the injustices African Americans continue to face. The USO is committed to being a part of the solution in ending racism and racial injustice.

An important part of that commitment is recognizing that diversity in all its facets – thought, race, culture, gender, and others – strengthens and unifies us as an organization, a people and a Nation. The very motto of our proud land – *e pluribus unum*, ‘out of many, one’ – reflects the truth that we are stronger with many voices, working as one team, focused on our mission – whether it’s serving our troops or helping each other build a just society with opportunity for all.

Now is the time for all of us to renew our commitment to our value of respect and diversity. In recognition of Juneteenth, a day commemorating the end of the last vestige of slavery in this country, the USO is closing its offices on Friday, June 19th.

We encourage our staff, volunteers, supporters and the service members we serve, to reflect on the significance of this important event in our Nation’s history and to bring their own perspectives and points of view to the conversation. Our unique and shared experiences can only serve to create a better USO and a better America.”

About the USO:

The USO strengthens America's military service members by keeping them connected to family, home and country, throughout their service to the Nation. At hundreds of locations worldwide, we are united in our commitment to connect our service members and their families through countless acts of caring, comfort, and support. The USO is a private, nonprofit organization, not a government agency. Our programs, services and entertainment tours are made possible by the American people, support of our corporate partners, and the dedication of our volunteers and staff. To join us in this important mission, and to learn more about the USO, please visit [uso.org](https://www.uso.org).

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