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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MINNESOTA MILITARY FAMILY TRIBUTE GROUNDBREAKING SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 4, 2014**

APRIL 16, 2014 – GOLDEN VALLEY, MN

*The groundbreaking ceremony for the Minnesota Military Family Tribute will take place on Wednesday, June 4, 2014 at 11 am on the Minnesota State Capitol grounds in St. Paul.*

Designed to honor the families of active and veteran members of the military, the Tribute will be the first of its kind in the nation. Poised on the grounds of the Minnesota State Capitol Mall, the Tribute will thank those that have made, and continue to make, sacrifices here at home.

Framing the south end of the Minnesota State Capitol Mall, the Tribute will consist of three main components: the *Gold Star Table*, *Story Stones* and the *Thank You Military and Veteran Family Walkway*. The Gold Star Table recognizes the supreme sacrifice of Gold Star Families - the life of a loved one. Its five-pointed foundation resembles the Gold Star. The Story Stones will represent the counties from which Minnesota soldiers hail and will include excerpts from correspondence sent by family members, providing a window into the lives of our military and veteran families and their sacrifices. Finally, the Walkway will respond to the seasons through a majestic row of trees lining the promenade.

For all, the Tribute will serve as a reminder of the sacrifices military and veteran families make to our Nation. The Tribute shows military and veteran families we thank them, we care and we will never forget. The Tribute will forever stand as a thank you to every Minnesota military and veteran family member – past, present and future.

To build the tribute, \$1 million in funds were secured through private donations, including generous contributions from the Tribute's Founding Partners: Davisco, Federated Insurance, Popp Communications, Starkey, and Wells Fargo.



The groundbreaking ceremony will take place June 4<sup>th</sup> at 11 am, with a program beginning at 12pm, and speakers will include: Governor Mark Dayton; Bill Popp, Chair of the Minnesota Military Family Tribute; Ted Lee, HGA and a Blue Star Family representative; Ken and Julie Drevnick, Gold Star Family representatives; Congressman Erik Paulsen, Minnesota's Third Congressional District; Larry Shellito, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs; and other dignitaries.

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**NOTE:** The Minnesota Military Family Tribute (MFT) is a 501(c)3 organization with a mission to build a Tribute on the State Capitol Mall in St. Paul, Minnesota that will forever stand as a thank you to every military and veteran family member—past, present and future. A military or veteran family member is defined as a spouse, significant other, child, parent, grandparent, sibling, or any other person a soldier defines as family.

[www.militaryfamilytribute.org](http://www.militaryfamilytribute.org)