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ThanksUSA Benefit Concert on Feb. 21 with Gov. Bob McDonnell and Tenor Anthony Kearns Yields Five New Scholarships for U.S. Military Families

McLean, Va., March 1, 2011 – Tenor Anthony Kearns performed a magnificent concert for a magnificent cause on Presidents' Day, entertaining special guest Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell, as well as sponsors, community leaders, and members of U.S. Armed Forces. Through the generosity of the event sponsors and guests, ThanksUSA will be able to provide five new scholarships for U.S. military families.

Also attending the invitation-only event at a private home were former Virginia Governor George Allen and his wife Susan; Larry Michael of Washington Redskins Media; former U.S. Ambassador to Ireland Margaret Heckler; officials from the Embassies of Ireland and New Zealand; and other V.I.P.s.

Mr. Anthony Kearns is the founding member of The Irish Tenors, among Ireland's most famous musicians, alongside the rock group U2. He also enjoys a robust solo career and last month made his U.S. debut in Grand Opera as the lead tenor role in Lucia di Lammermoor with Opera Naples (Fla.). He entertained the ThanksUSA gathering with selections from his unique solo repertoire of Broadway favorites, classical music, operatic arias and the best of Irish music. His accompanist was Patrick Healy, a renowned musician who also hails from Ireland and regularly performs with Mr. Kearns.

Said Gov. McDonnell: "Thanks USA is a great organization that helps spouses and children of our service members get a quality higher education. It is important to show our support and encouragement to the men and women in uniform, and their families, who sacrifice greatly for the cause of freedom. We cannot do enough to give back to those who defend this great nation and I am pleased to support the tremendous work of Thanks USA. I also commend Anthony Kearns, Ireland's leading tenor, for giving his time and talent toward this worthy endeavor."

"It was a great honor to team up with Governor McDonnell for such a noble and worthy cause – one that gives the gift of education to military families through ThanksUSA," said Kearns.

ThanksUSA provides need-based post-secondary school scholarships to the children and spouses of members of the Armed Forces across all services, including the National Guard and Reserves. ThanksUSA has awarded 2,200 scholarships in five years.

"Through this one wonderful evening supported by Governor McDonnell and elevated to musical heights by Mr. Kearns, we were able to thank five more members of our military family with the gift of ThanksUSA scholarships," said ThanksUSA Chairman and CEO Bob Okun. "This is our mission and we are grateful for all the support we receive that lets us thank our military men and women in return for their sacrifice."

Governor McDonnell strongly supports the ThanksUSA mission. At the event he noted that Virginia has more veterans than any other state, and he understands the challenges facing members of the Armed

Forces and their families. He served as a soldier for 21 years (active-duty Army and Reserve), and he is the son of a World War II veteran and father of a daughter who served in the United States Army in Iraq.

Mr. Kearns travelled from Dublin, Ireland last year to perform at Governor McDonnell's Inaugural Gala and a bipartisan prayer breakfast. The Governor is second generation Irish, as his grandfather came from County Mayo in 1912. This is Kearns' fourth concert benefiting ThanksUSA. He returns to the U.S. in March to begin a month-long tour, said his representative, Kirsten Fedewa, who also secured Gov. McDonnell's participation in the charity event.

For more information on ThanksUSA, go to www.ThanksUSA.org. For more about Anthony Kearns, visit www.anthonykearnsmusic.com or contact Kirsten Fedewa at 202.365.6936.

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