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Southwest Airlines Performs Christmas Miracle for 171 Texas Families

Southwest Brings 171 Soldiers Home for the Holidays

DALLAS, Dec. 21 /PRNewswire/ -- Southwest Airlines will fly 171 Texas Army National Guard soldiers from North Carolina to Texas on Sunday, Dec. 23. The 436th Chemical Company of the Texas Army National Guard is stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, waiting for deployment to Afghanistan. They recently got news that their deployment has been delayed, so now they are able to spend the holidays with their families, and Southwest Airlines is making it possible! The soldiers will arrive in Austin, Dallas, and San Antonio on Sunday courtesy of Southwest. Southwest Airlines Employees and Customers will be alongside their families to welcome home the soldiers!

"Southwest Airlines is happy to be able to grant this Christmas wish for these troops to reunite with their families," said Southwest Airlines President Colleen Barrett. "We are so proud of what these soldiers are doing for our country, and we are blessed to give back."

When the troops' scheduled departure to Afghanistan was delayed, the Commander said the soldiers could go home for the holidays if arrangements were possible for every soldier. Families scurried to raise money to fund everyone's trip to Texas, but were unsuccessful. Southwest Airlines learned of the effort and stepped in to offer flights to all 171 soldiers!

"The support and generosity of Southwest Airlines is an unbelievable blessing to our soldiers and their families," said Dora Cortez, member of the 436th Chemical Company's Family Support Group. "Many of the children haven't asked for Christmas presents this year; they simply want their daddies home."

Southwest Airlines is proud to support our troops. The airline has more than 700 of its own family who serve in the National Guard and Reserves. Southwest Airlines has gained recognition for its commitment to these Employees. In 2007, Southwest Airlines was named one of the Top 50 Military Friendly Employers. Also, Southwest Airlines was recognized by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) in 2003 for its commitment and support of the airline's Employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV), the nation's largest carrier in terms of domestic passengers enplaned, currently serves 64 cities in 32 states. Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,400 flights a day and has more than 33,000 Employees systemwide.

<http://www.southwest.com>

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