



Contact: Nicole Fischer
16020 Swingley Ridge Rd., Ste. 300
Chesterfield, MO 63017
Phone: 636/449-5060
E-mail: fischer@drakeco.com
www.christmasspiritfoundation.org
Photos available upon request

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Trees For Troops Program Earns National Award

(Chesterfield, MO – October 28, 2008) The Christmas SPIRIT Foundation has been nationally recognized for its Trees for Troops program by the 2008 Associations Advance America Summit Award from American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) and the Center for Association Leadership.

The Christmas SPIRIT Foundation (CSF) – with support from FedEx Freight – has delivered more than 34,000 Real Christmas Trees to military families since Trees for Troops began in 2005. It has grown from about 400 Christmas tree farms and retailers participating to more than 850. Almost 17,000 families at more than 40 military bases received a Christmas Tree in 2007 grown by an American tree farm.

“We are excited to receive this significant honor recognizing the work of hundreds of volunteers in the Christmas tree industry,” said Steve Drake, CEO of the Christmas SPIRIT Foundation. “The Trees for Troops program represents the work of more than 850 tree farms and retailers along with the hundreds of miles and hours provided by our partners at FedEx Freight. All these efforts have allowed us to deliver fresh, farm-grown trees and holiday memories to more than 34,000 military families. We look forward to an expanded program in 2008.”

Drake said the most common response from farms and retailers when asked why they participate and donate trees is that it's the least we could do. “They know these families are sacrificing so much to protect our country and if donating some of their trees can help bring a little Christmas spirit to them, then, that's why they do it,” said Drake.

The Summit Award symbolizes the best efforts engineered by associations across the country in areas like public education/information, economic development, business and social innovation, skills training/development and civic and volunteer activities.

The awards were judged by members of ASAE who volunteer to serve in a leadership capacity and advise the organization on the various elements of the Associations Advance America public awareness and recognition program.

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