



**American
Red Cross**

of Greater Columbus

NEWS ADVISORY

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For Immediate Release

American Red Cross Alerts Public to Scam Targeting Military Families

June 13, 2008 - The American National Red Cross Office of Investigations, Compliance and Ethics has been alerted to a scam targeting the families of military staff. A caller contacts a spouse or another family member of a military staff person and identifies himself/herself as a representative of the American Red Cross. The caller states the military staff person has been injured while on duty in Iraq and is being or will be air-lifted to Germany for treatment and care. The caller may ask for additional information about the military staff person; for example, date of birth or social security number. In a subsequent call, the caller updates the family member and asks for a donation to the Red Cross to help cover the cost of the air-lift and medical care.

This is a scam using the Red Cross brand. American Red Cross representatives typically do not contact military members or military dependents when a service member has been injured or killed in action. Rather the service member's Command or the casualty assistance branch of the respective Service contacts the primary next of kin when a service member has been injured or killed in action.

Military families are urged not to give out any personal information or money over the phone if contacted by unknown/unverified individuals, including confirmation that a family member is deployed. Should any military family member receive such a call, they are urged to report it to their local Family Readiness Group or Military Personnel Unit.

The American Red Cross ensures that the American people are in touch with their family members serving in the United States military by operating a communications network that is open 24/7. Through a network of employees and volunteers that link families during emergencies, the Red Cross provides communications for families left behind, assistance to veterans and preparedness courses for military personnel and their families. For more information or if you would like to make a donation to the Red Cross, only use the authorized Red Cross Website, www.redcross.org or www.icrc.org.

The American Red Cross of Greater Columbus is dedicated to helping make families and communities safer at home and around the world. Sustained by over 600 volunteers, the Red Cross provides assistance to more than 500 families each year after home fires and other disasters strike. Last year the organization trained and educated more than 97,000 area residents in vital lifesaving skills like first aid, CPR and how to prepare for emergencies. The Red Cross also sent more than 800 emergency messages between members of the military and their families. The community transportation program provides rides to medical appointments for seniors and individuals with disabilities, logging more than 19,600 trips last year. All these programs and more are made possible by the donations of time and money from the greater Columbus community.

Michael Carroll is the CEO of the American Red Cross of Greater Columbus and Michael Schoedinger serves as the board chair.

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