



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contact:**

Joseph Cohen  
703-302-8640

[Mediarelations@salvationarmyusa.org](mailto:Mediarelations@salvationarmyusa.org)

**South Carolina Native to Headline National Event Honoring 100+ Year  
Relationship Between U.S. Military and Salvation Army**

*Van D. Hipp, Jr., Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Army and South Carolina native to be featured speaker at ceremony in Arlington National Cemetery*

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (May 14, 2021) The Salvation Army will hold a ceremony at the gravesite of General John J. Pershing in Arlington National Cemetery, with the message, “Still Here, Still Serving,” on Sunday, May 16. The event will honor U.S. soldiers and Salvation Army volunteers who served during World War I, with South Carolina native, Salvation Army board member, and current Chairman of American Defense International, Inc., Van D. Hipp, Jr. as the event’s featured speaker.

“I’m humbled and deeply honored to speak at this year’s annual event at Arlington National Cemetery. No matter how tough the times or how hard the fight, the Salvation Army is always on the front line helping those in need,” Hipp said.

In addition to supporting The Salvation Army’s work, Mr. Hipp, Jr. is a decorated military veteran and former Deputy Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Army.

“The Salvation Army is deeply grateful for Mr. Hipp’s lifetime of service,” said Commissioner Kenneth G. Hodder, National Commander for The Salvation Army. “His presence and words will be essential to honoring the veterans and volunteers who sacrificed so much for our great nation, as well as demonstrating that we are still here, still serving.”

In 1917, General John J. Pershing—then called the General of the U.S. Armies—permitted some 250 Salvation Army officers to cross the Atlantic Ocean and serve U.S. soldiers at the front lines of WWI. Famously known as ‘Doughnut Lassies,’ these officers would provide comfort food, drinks, and moral support to soldiers returning from the horrors of trench warfare.

The trust General Pershing placed in The Salvation Army at that time turned out to be pivotal. It allowed The Salvation Army to provide support, hope, and ministry on the front lines, to become one of the founding members of the USO, and to establish a legacy of service that The Salvation Army continues more than a century later.

Under the banner of “Still Here, Still Serving,” the May 16<sup>th</sup> ceremony by The Salvation Army will demonstrate a renewed commitment to serving veterans and the American people while honoring the U.S. Armed Forces and General John J. Pershing for their support during some of the darkest times in world history.

The ceremony will include a wreath laying at the gravesite of General John J. Pershing as the culminating moment of National Salvation Army Week 2021, which is held annually in May.

The Salvation Army serves more than 30 million Americans each year and provided nearly 225 million meals for those facing economic and health challenges amid the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.



Van Hipp is a recipient of the 2018 Queen Elizabeth II September 11th Garden Leadership Award for National Security, and The Salvation Army National Capital Area Command's 2015 "Compassionate Citizen Award."

Those interested in viewing the ceremony can find livestream details here:

[www.salarmy.us/stillserving](http://www.salarmy.us/stillserving)

### **About The Salvation Army USA**

The Salvation Army annually helps 30 million Americans overcome poverty, addiction, and economic hardships through a range of social services. By providing food for the hungry, emergency relief for disaster survivors, rehabilitation for those suffering from drug and alcohol abuse, and clothing and shelter for people in need, The Salvation Army is doing the most good at 7,600 centers of operation around the country. In the first-ever listing of "America's Favorite Charities" by The Chronicle of Philanthropy, The Salvation Army ranked as the country's largest privately funded, direct-service nonprofit. For more information, visit [SalvationArmyUSA.org](http://SalvationArmyUSA.org). Follow us on Twitter: @SalvationArmyUS and #DoingTheMostGood