

Contact: Eileen Wunderlich

Carrie McElwee

## **Soldier Serving in Iraq Surprised with Keys to an All-new 2008 Jeep® Liberty**

- Keys placed in 300,000th Operation Gratitude care package delivered to Specialist Michael Gallagher at Forward Operating Base Warhorse in Iraq on Jan. 22
- Vehicle donated by Jeep brand as an expression of gratitude to all those serving overseas

January 23, 2008, Auburn Hills, Mich. - Specialist (Spc.) Michael Gallagher from Fort Lewis, Wash., and currently serving in Iraq, found a nice surprise in the package he received from Operation Gratitude on Jan. 22. The non-profit organization that sends care packages and letters of support to troops deployed overseas personally delivered its 300,000th package, containing keys to an all-new 2008 Jeep® Liberty vehicle, to a surprised Spc. Gallagher at

Forward Operating Base Warhorse in Iraq.

The package was delivered by Operation Gratitude's founder, Carolyn Blashek, and director of operations, Charlie Othold.

"When my commander ordered me to show up to this ceremony, I thought it was just another care package and they were making a big deal about it because it was the 300,000th one," said Gallagher. "When I opened up the envelope (containing the keys to the Jeep inside), it completely blew my mind."

The Jeep brand, with its long history of supporting the military, donated the vehicle as an expression of gratitude to all the men and women currently serving with the U.S. military overseas. In addition to the Jeep Liberty keys, the package contained a letter from John Plecha, Director-Jeep Marketing and Global Communications, and other gifts from U.S. citizens and companies that generously support the operation.

Addressed to "Dear American Hero," Plecha's letter read, "As the recipient of the 300,000th Operation Gratitude care package, the Jeep brand is delighted to award you a Jeep vehicle of your own as a symbol of our appreciation, as you represent all those who bravely go in harms way in service to our country."

Gallagher is a vehicle commander from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Lewis, Wash. His name was randomly placed on the 300,000th package. He will receive his new Jeep Liberty upon returning to the U.S.

With its origin dating back to WWII, the Jeep brand has long supported Operation Gratitude and the U.S. military. Chrysler LLC recently partnered with The Freedom Calls Foundation to make the company's video conferencing facilities in southeast Michigan available to connect families and soldiers during the holiday season.

### **Jeep® Brand**

The Jeep brand expanded to seven nameplates in the 2007 model year, the most available to retail consumers at one time in the brand's 66-year history. With the introduction of the all-new 2008 Jeep Liberty mid-size sport-utility vehicle (SUV), the Jeep brand offers customers the freshest, most capable and widest range of sport-utility vehicles under one brand in the industry.

At the start of 2004, the brand's trio of tough, capable, rugged SUVs included the venerable Jeep Grand Cherokee, Jeep Liberty (Cherokee outside North America) and the icon of the brand, the Jeep Wrangler. The Jeep Commander was introduced in 2005 followed in 2006 by the all-new Jeep Wrangler. Three more all-new Jeep vehicles: Jeep Patriot, Jeep Compass and the four-door Jeep Wrangler Unlimited also made their debut in the 2006 calendar year.

### **Operation Gratitude**

Operation Gratitude ([www.operationgratitude.com](http://www.operationgratitude.com)) is a California-based 501 (c) (3) non-profit, all-volunteer organization that sends care packages of snacks, entertainment items and personal letters of appreciation addressed to individually named U.S. Service Members deployed in hostile regions such as Iraq and Afghanistan and on military ships at sea. Its mission is to lift morale, bring a smile to a service member's face and to express to all troops the appreciation and support of the American people. The organization sends more than 100,000 care packages every year. Since its inception in March 2003, Operation Gratitude has shipped more than 315,000 packages to American troops deployed overseas.

-###-

Additional information and news from Stellantis are available at: <https://media.stellantisnorthamerica.com>