Econo Lodge Hotels Team with Strikeouts For Troops to Help Consumers Send Personal 'Thank You' Notes to U.S. Armed Forces

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How would you choose to say "Thank You"?

-- "I am honored to thank each and every one of you. You make me proud."
-- "I get teary-eyed when I think of all our troops have done to impact my life and the lives of others throughout the world."
-- "Oorah! As a United States Marine Corp SSgt, I am honored to serve with you!"
-- "It's a great joy to say thank you to our soldiers. More than you know - thank you!"
-- "Words can't express our gratitude for (you) serving our wonderful nation."
-- "My Dear Soldier: Thank you so much for protecting our country."

-- "To the mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends. . .thank you."

These are just a few of the hundreds of personalized "Thank You" messages from the public that were sent directly to U.S. troops injured in the line of duty. These unique and heart-warming messages were the central theme of the recent American Values sweepstakes from Econo Lodge hotels and Strikeouts For Troops(TM).

Strikeouts For Troops is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to raising money to help wounded troops being treated at military hospitals across the country. As one of the organization's sponsors, Econo Lodge hotels were proud to offer its guests a chance to reach out and say "Thank You" to their nation's troops.

"We're thrilled to have played a part in bringing these personal thank you notes to our troops for the valuable service they've given and the tremendous sacrifice they've made for their country," said Chris Malone, chief marketing officer for Choice Hotels.

Econo Lodge hotels also offered consumers a chance to win great travel-related prizes. As part of the American Values sweepstakes, 15 individuals received unique prizes, including five Grand Prize trips for two to any Econo Lodge hotel in North America with four nights, roundtrip airfare, ground transportation and $1,000 spending money.

In addition to the brand's donation of $5,000 to Strikeouts For Troops, Econo Lodge hotels are also proud to invite all active duty or reserve military members, retired military, National Guard, U.S. Coast Guard, as well as eligible spouses and dependents, to join the Choice Privileges rewards program at the Elite Gold level, to receive special perks through the Armed Services program, including a 10 percent point bonus on qualifying stays at over 5,000 locations as well as exclusive Elite member offers and services.*

For more information on Strikeouts For Troops, visit www.strikeoutsfortroops.org. For more information on the Econo Lodge brand, franchised by Choice Hotels International, Inc. , visit econolodge.com.

About Strikeouts For Troops

Strikeouts For Troops is a national nonprofit dedicated to help our U.S. wounded service members and

their families with "comforts of home" while lifting the spirits and morale during an often long recovery process. Strikeouts For Troops was introduced on April 5, 2005 by San Francisco Giants pitcher Barry Zito following a visit with troops at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. With the support of over 65 professional baseball players including CC Sabathia, Alex Rodriguez and Nick Swisher (New York Yankees), Jake Peavy (San Diego Padres), Albert Pujols (St. Louis Cardinals) and Manny Ramirez (Los Angeles Dodgers), special events, fan support and corporate partnerships, Strikeouts For Troops has raised nearly $2 million with 100% of the funds raised being distributed. Strikeouts For Troops is a 501(c)(3) donor advised fund based at the Community Foundation For The National Capital Region.

About Choice Hotels

Choice Hotels International franchises more than 5,800 hotels, representing more than 475,000 rooms, in the United States and more than 30 countries and territories. As of March 31, 2009, 896 hotels are under construction, awaiting conversion or approved for development in the United States, representing 70,381 rooms, and an additional 111 hotels, representing 9,114 rooms, are under construction, awaiting conversion or approved for development in more than 15 countries and territories. The company's Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, Quality, Sleep Inn, Clarion, Cambria Suites, MainStay Suites, Suburban Extended Stay Hotel, Econo Lodge and Rodeway Inn brands serve guests worldwide. In addition, via its Ascend Collection membership program, travelers in the United States and the Caribbean have upscale lodging options at historic, boutique and unique hotels.

Additional corporate information may be found on the Choice Hotels website, which may be accessed at choicehotels.com.

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*Restrictions apply. See choiceprivileges.com/armedservices for details.

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