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May 18, 2012

**BLUE STAR FAMILIES JOINS FORCES WITH THE FIRST LADY AND DR. BIDEN TO GIVE  
MILITARY FAMILIES FREE ADMISSION TO 1,600 MUSEUMS**

*Through Blue Star Museums, museums across America will invite military personnel and their families to visit their museums to participate in the arts free of charge all summer long*

WHAT: A press conference and tour in The Metropolitan Museum of Art to announce [Blue Star Museums](#), a collaboration among the National Endowment for the Arts, Blue Star Families, the Department of Defense, and more than 1,600 museums across America to offer free admission to all active duty military personnel and their families from Memorial Day (Monday, May 28, 2012) through Labor Day 2012 (Monday, September 3, 2012). Leadership support has been provided by MetLife Foundation through Blue Star Families.

Active duty military personnel and their families may visit [www.arts.gov/bluestarmuseums](http://www.arts.gov/bluestarmuseums) to find a complete list of the participating museums.

Following the press conference, there will be a photo opportunity with the speakers and military families, followed by a tour in The Metropolitan Museum of Art. More than 40 museums in New York City are participating in Blue Star Museums.

WHO: The press conference will feature remarks by Metropolitan Museum President **Emily Rafferty**; Blue Star Families CEO **Kathy Roth-Douquet**; NEA Chairman **Rocco Landesman**, Executive Director, Joining Forces, Captain Brad Cooper (USN), and **A. Dennis White**, CEO and President of MetLife Foundation.

WHERE: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Avenue (Please use the entrance at 81<sup>st</sup> Street and Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10028)

Remarks will take place in the Douglas Dillon Board Room followed by tours in the Museum's galleries.

WHEN: Tuesday, May 22, 2012

10:00 am – 10:30 am — Press conference and Q&A in the Douglas Dillon Board Room.

10:30 am – 11:15 am — Military families and other guests will view The Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Roof Garden (weather permitting), the New American Wing Galleries for Paintings, Sculpture, and Decorative Arts, and the Arms and Armor Galleries.

11:30 am — event concludes

PHOTO/INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY: Photo opportunities will take place on The Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Roof Garden (weather permitting), the New American Wing Galleries for Paintings, Sculpture, and Decorative Arts, and the Arms and Armor Galleries.

Interview opportunities with press conference speakers and military families representing the services of the U.S. Armed Forces will be available immediately following the press conference.

CONTACT: Media must RSVP to Stephanie Himel-Nelson, Blue Star Families Communications Director at [stephanie@bluestarfam.org](mailto:stephanie@bluestarfam.org) or Sally Gifford, NEA Public Affairs, 202-682-5606.

FOLLOW: Blue Star Museums is on Twitter at [@NEAarts](#), hashtag #bluestarmuse. To learn more about the White House's Joining Forces initiative visit [JoiningForces.gov](http://JoiningForces.gov) and follow on Twitter [@JoiningForces](#) and on [Facebook](#).

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