



High School Band Supports Troops Through VFW Program

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The Carroll Dragon Band at Carroll High School in Southlake, Texas paid tribute to our troops with their 2011 competition show, “To Honor Those Who Serve and Protect.” The show was set to military-themed music and allowed the band an avenue to show their support for U.S. service members. Wanting to do more than simply honor the troops though, the band researched ways they could directly impact those who are fighting for our freedoms overseas.

“We considered a number of options—care packages, phone cards, etc., but settled on the idea of raising money in support of an organization that was already doing one or more of those things,” explained band board member Mike Adler.

When they came across *VFW’s Operation Uplink™* program while researching phone cards online, it seemed like a great fit. They would tie-in the band’s military-themed show with a home football game and hold a fundraiser for *Operation Uplink*.

“We liked this program better than providing phone cards directly, as it provides the calls through a system that can be tracked and accounted for, as opposed to calling cards which can fall into the wrong hands, get lost, etc. In addition, *VFW’s Operation Uplink* appeared to provide more minutes to the soldiers for each dollar donated,” said Adler.

The fundraiser was a smashing success. Around 10,000 fans attended the game against Carroll High School’s cross-town rivals, and donations totaled nearly \$6,500. The board coordinated with local VFW Posts and many VFW members were on-site to assist with the collections.

Flyers were handed out to fans as they entered the parking lot to make them aware of the fundraiser and that donations could be made near the stadium entrance gates. Various school groups, including band members, cheerleaders, the drill team and the football team, all contributed to the fundraiser.

“The tie-in with the military theme of the band’s show created a unique opportunity for us to do something special this year. Fundraising for other organizations is not a core mission of our Booster organization, but we were delighted to make it happen,” said Adler.

To learn more about *Operation Uplink* and other VFW National Military Services programs, click [here](#).

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National Military Services is a department of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW). If you have questions about this Update, please contact Michael Penney, National Military Services Director, at mpenney@vfw.org or 816-756-3390.