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**AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCES \$3 MILLION GIFT
FOR THE EDUCATION CENTER AT THE WALL**

March 7 Ceremony at the Lincoln Memorial Begins at 8:30 a.m.

Washington, D.C. – Australian **Prime Minister Julia Gillard** will speak on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on Monday morning, March 7, to announce the Australian government's \$3 million gift to build the Education Center at The Wall, said Jan C. Scruggs, founder and president of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF), the organization spearheading the campaign to build the Center. This is the first government institution to donate to the Education Center, and the first foreign gift the Center has received.

Prime Minister Gillard will arrive at the Lincoln Memorial at 8:30 a.m. The speaking portion of the event will begin at 8:45 a.m.

“The Australians were our steadfast allies during the Vietnam War,” said Scruggs. “We are gratified that the Australian people feel so deeply about helping us build the Education Center at The Wall, to honor all who served and sacrificed during that war. We welcome their partnership once again in this important endeavor.”

Other speakers at the March 7 ceremony will include **Gen. Barry McCaffrey**, USA (Ret.), and **Adm. Michael Mullen**, USN, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. **Jan Scruggs** will be the master of ceremonies for the event. All three served during the Vietnam War. Among the notable guests will be Australia's Minister for Veterans' Affairs **Warren Snowdon**; Australian Ambassador to the United States **Kim Beazley**; U.S. Ambassador to Australia **Jeff Bleich**; and the U.S. Deputy Secretary of the Interior **David Hayes**.

Australia and the United States have a history of friendship and mutual support that goes back to the last century. Australians fought beside U.S. service members in World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the current conflicts.

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During the Vietnam War, Australia sent its Army, Navy and Air Force to assist in the war effort, including nearly 42,000 Army, just under 13,000 Royal Australian Navy (RAN), and over 4,700 Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) personnel. In all, 521 Australian service members died as a result of the war, and more than 3,000 were wounded.

While the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. includes only the names of members of the U.S. armed forces who died or remain missing during the Vietnam War, there is one native-born Australian whose name is on The Wall: John Louis Molyneaux Jr., Panel 45W, Row 15, who served as a first lieutenant in the U.S. Marines Corps and died on August 31, 1968, in Quang Nam Province, South Vietnam.

INCLEMENT WEATHER: If the weather on Monday morning is inclement, the ceremony will be moved to the Australian Embassy (1601 Massachusetts Ave., NW). The determination of any change in venue will be made by 6 a.m. on Monday, March 7. To confirm the site for the ceremony, call the Australian Embassy Status Line at (888) 210-8929 after 6 a.m.

About the Education Center

The Education Center at The Wall is a learning facility being built in the nation's capital near the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. It was conceived as a way to put faces to the thousands of names on The Wall, to educate current and future generations about these honorable men and women who gave everything for their country and to tell their stories. Other exhibits will showcase some of the 150,000 items left at The Wall in tribute, provide a timeline of events for the Vietnam War and the building of The Wall, examine the service and sacrifice of special groups of people, and celebrate the values embodied by all of America's service members. More than \$25 million has been raised so far to build the Center, including the lead gift from Time Warner. For more information, visit www.buildthecenter.org.

About VVMF

Established in 1979, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is dedicated to preserving the legacy of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., promoting healing and educating about the impact of the Vietnam War. Authorized by Congress, its most recent initiative is building the Education Center at The Wall, an underground facility near the Memorial that is designed to add faces to all the names on The Wall and tell their stories. Other Memorial Fund initiatives include educational programs for students and teachers, a traveling Wall replica that honors our nation's veterans and a humanitarian and mine-action program in Vietnam.

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