

# SONS AND DAUGHTERS IN TOUCH

*"They Were Our Fathers..."*

**For immediate release**

## **U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SALUTES SONS AND DAUGHTERS IN TOUCH FOR 20th ANNIVERSARY**

*Gold Star Children of Vietnam War KIAs and MIAs to Hold Reunion June 18 to 20  
in Washington, D.C.; Father's Day Ceremony Set for 10 a.m. at The Wall*

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (May 26, 2010)**—Less than a month before the organization's 20th anniversary celebration this coming Father's Day weekend, the U.S. House of Representatives honored Sons and Daughters In Touch Monday by unanimously passing a resolution that lauds the organization for its longtime support of Gold Star families and for its historic milestone.

H.Con.Res. 278 recognizes SDIT as "the only national organization formed specifically to bring together and support the children and families of [the] American heroes" who died or remain missing as a result of the Vietnam War. The resolution applauds SDIT for being "a resilient example to all nations affected by war." It also honors SDIT for its "unique position to serve as an example to current and future generations of Gold Star families as they bear the painful burden resulting from the selfless sacrifices made by their mothers and fathers in wartime service to the nation."

Rep. Debbie Halvorson (D-Ill.), a member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, introduced the resolution earlier this month. Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman Bob Filner (D-Calif.) cosponsored the legislation. The U.S. Senate is expected to pass a companion resolution.

"SDIT and its members are grateful to Rep. Halvorson and Chairman Filner for their support and for the recognition they have brought to this organization and its mission," said Colleen Shine, of Arlington, Va., a former director and founding member of SDIT, who was in the House chamber with her seven-year-old daughter as the resolution was approved. "This resolution not only honors the strength and resilience of America's Gold Star children from the Vietnam War, but also shines a positive spotlight this Memorial Day week on the service and sacrifice our fathers made many decades ago."

Added Shine: "Father's Day is a poignant time for those who have lost a parent to war and as we celebrate our 20th anniversary this declaration of support by the House of Representatives and the American people is deeply appreciated. It is tangible proof that the sacrifices of America's Gold Star families—of yesterday and of today—will never be forgotten."

Shine—daughter of U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Anthony C. Shine, whose jet was lost over North Vietnam Dec. 2, 1972—will be one of nearly 1,000 SDIT members and their families who are expected to participate in the organization's Father's Day Weekend Reunion activities in the Washington, D.C. area from June 18 to 20.

Founded in 1990, SDIT works to locate, unite and support those sons and daughters whose fathers made the ultimate sacrifice during the Vietnam War. Although accurate records are not available, it is estimated that 20,000 American children lost their fathers in our nation's longest and most controversial war.

**(more)**

**SDIT To Celebrate 20th Anniversary Over  
Father's Day Weekend in Washington, D.C.  
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The SDIT reunion will feature remembrances, seminars and special events. The highlight will be the Father's Day ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (The Wall) June 20 at 10 a.m. The keynote speaker will be U.S. Army Chief of Staff and SDIT member Gen. George W. Casey Jr., who has served our country proudly during his 40-year military career. Gen. Casey previously served as the commanding general of the Multi-National Force in Iraq from June 2004 to February 2007. He became the 36th Army chief of staff on April 10, 2007.

His father, George W. Casey Sr., was a West Point graduate who served in the Korean and Vietnam wars and rose to the rank of major general. Maj. Gen. Casey commanded the 1st Cavalry Division in Vietnam and was killed July 7, 1970 when his command helicopter crashed in South Vietnam while en route to a hospital where Casey was to visit wounded U.S. soldiers.

The Father's Day ceremony will conclude with SDIT members laying 2,000 red, yellow and white roses in honor of their fathers at the base of The Wall. SDIT is encouraging all Gold Star sons and daughters—those who lost their fathers in a U.S. military conflict—to participate in the June 20 Father's Day tribute.

Other SDIT reunion weekend activities are:

- All-day sharing circles June 18 and 19—moderated by peer mentors—that will allow SDIT members and other Gold Star children to share stories about their lives and the emotional challenges of growing up without a father;
- SDIT members and their families will wash The Wall the morning of June 18; and
- A banquet celebrating the resilience of all Gold Star families will take place June 19 at 6 p.m. U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. and SDIT member Robert M. Worley II will be the featured speaker. His father—Maj. Gen. Robert F. Worley—was killed July 23, 1969 when his plane was shot down over South Vietnam.

**About Sons and Daughters In Touch**

For 20 years Sons and Daughters In Touch ([www.sdit.org](http://www.sdit.org)) has worked to locate, unite and provide support to the now-grown children of American service members who made the ultimate sacrifice in the Vietnam War. Since the organization's founding, its more than 3,000 members have contacted veterans who served with their fathers, visited the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and shared their life-experiences with others, often for the first time. In 2003, more than 70 SDIT members traveled to Vietnam to meet the people their fathers fought to protect, to walk the ground their fathers tread and to visit the locations where their fathers died. Today, SDIT members are using their "unique life-experiences" to assist younger Gold Star "sons and daughters" who have lost a parent in America's current military conflicts.

**MEDIA NOTE:** SDIT members from around the country are available to discuss the organization, its 20th Anniversary Reunion and their lives growing up without their fathers. To schedule an interview contact Alan Greilsamer at (703) 760-7007 or [info@communications-resources.com](mailto:info@communications-resources.com).

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