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## **PILOT PEN HONORS U.S. SERVICE MEMBERS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP WITH OPERATION GRATITUDE**

*Partnering for a Second Year, the Writing Instrument Company Increases Pen Donation and Promotes Red, Write and Blue Thank You Letter Initiative, through Veteran's Day*

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (May 26, 2017) – As the United States remembers those who have made the ultimate sacrifice this Memorial Day, Pilot Corporation of America (Pilot Pen) and Operation Gratitude – a national organization that assembles and distributes personalized care packages to service members and veterans – have joined forces for a second year to acknowledge and thank those individuals who work tirelessly to protect our freedom every day through the **Red, Write and Blue Initiative**.

Through this initiative, Pilot Pen and Operation Gratitude invite Americans to put pen to paper and hand write letters of thanks to service members, veterans and first responders. Thank you letters are often some of the most valued items in Operation Gratitude's care packages, and are a perfect way to express your personal appreciation to these brave men and women. Those interested in participating can visit [PowertothePen.com/Gratitude](http://PowertothePen.com/Gratitude) to download thank you letter stationery and to learn more about the initiative.

This year, Pilot Pen has expanded their partnership with Operation Gratitude, increasing their donation to more than 600,000 CAMO pens (valued at nearly \$2.4 million) for inclusion in every single care package. Pilot Pen aims to assist with service members' everyday writing needs and to provide a tool for hand written communication with their loved ones back home.

"When we learned that handwritten letters are one of the most prized possessions included in each and every Operation Gratitude care package, we knew we had to get involved with this incredible program," said Ariann Langsam, Director of Marketing, Pilot Pen. "At Pilot, we believe in the power of the written word – in this case, the profound and personal impact a letter from a loved one, or even a stranger, can

have on a service member by providing a personal connection. We encourage everyone to join us in this show of support for our troops.”

Pilot CAMO ball point pens feature a stainless steel tip, comfortable rubber grip, and a choice of three camouflage designs, along with smooth, rapid-drying, smear-resistant ink. These pens’ durability and strong, spring-loaded clip are ideal for the wide variety of challenging terrain that our troops may encounter.

"With the expansion of Pilot's product donation, Operation Gratitude will be able to include a pen in care packages for many months to come," said Chris Clark, VP & Chief Development Officer, Operation Gratitude. "Written correspondence is an important part of many of our recipients’ lives, and being able to provide a quality writing instrument is a special aspect of the donation. Additionally, we're thrilled to see Pilot's continued commitment to collect handwritten letters of gratitude in the second year of this initiative."

For more information, please follow Pilot Pen and Operation Gratitude on social media at [Facebook.com/PilotPen](https://www.facebook.com/PilotPen) or [@PilotPenUSA](https://www.instagram.com/PilotPenUSA) and [@OpGratitude](https://www.instagram.com/OpGratitude) on Instagram and Twitter, and encourage others to pen it forward to support members of the military this year.

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## **ABOUT PILOT CORPORATION OF AMERICA**

Pilot Pen offers superlative writing instruments renowned for quality, performance, cutting-edge technology and consumer satisfaction. Widely acknowledged as innovators, Pilot was first to introduce Americans to fine-point writing, currently maintaining the top share position in the gel and rolling ball pen categories. Pilot’s line also includes the acclaimed Dr. Grip family of products featuring an ergonomic, wide comfort grip that reduces writing fatigue, as well as the notable Precise V5 and G2 lines. Pilot Pen manufactures and distributes from its state-of-the-art facility in Jacksonville, Florida; its parent company is the oldest and largest manufacturer of writing instruments in Japan. For more: [www.pilotpen.us](http://www.pilotpen.us).

## **ABOUT OPERATION GRATITUDE**

Operation Gratitude, a 501 (c) (3), volunteer-based organization, annually sends 250,000+ care packages to Veterans, New Recruits, First Responders, Wounded Heroes, Caregivers, and to individually named U.S. service members deployed overseas and their families waiting at home. Each package is filled with food, entertainment, hygiene and hand-made items, as well as personal letters of support. Operation Gratitude's mission is to lift the spirits and meet the evolving needs of the Military and First Responder communities, and provide volunteer opportunities for civilians anywhere in America to express their appreciation to all who serve our nation. Each package contains donated product valued between \$50 and \$100 and costs the organization \$15 to assemble and ship. Since its inception in 2003, Operation Gratitude volunteers have shipped more than 1.5 Million Care Packages. For more: [www.operationgratitude.com](http://www.operationgratitude.com).