



PRESS RELEASE

AMALIE ARENA | 401 CHANNELSIDE DRIVE TAMPA, FL 33602
PHONE: 813.301.6600 | FAX: 813.301.1487

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 29, 2019

Contact: Angela Lanza, 813.301.6893, alanza@amaliearena.com



Press Release 2019 DOD Warrior Games

COUNTRY MUSIC STARS HEADLINE 2019 DOD WARRIOR GAMES OPENING & CLOSING CEREMONIES

*Both the Concerts housed within the Opening and Closing Ceremony
are part of the Ford Concert Series at AMALIE Arena*

Tickets go on sale Friday, May 31 at 10:00 AM

Tampa, Fla. – The entire Tampa Bay community is invited to come out and be a part of history as Tampa Bay welcomes the 2019 Department of Defense (DoD) Warrior Games for the first time.

One of the biggest highlights of the Warrior Games are Opening and Closing Ceremonies, taking place at AMALIE Arena and hosted by former host of *The Daily Show*, and long-time supporter of the Warrior Games, Jon Stewart.

Two of country music's biggest stars are slated to take the stage during the events to entertain athletes, families and the Tampa Bay community. We welcome these artists to the stage as part of the Ford Concert Series.

Opening Ceremony

The 2019 Warrior Games Opening Ceremony will take place Saturday, June 22 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at AMALIE Arena. In addition to celebrating the start of the DOD Warrior Games, witness the lighting of the official cauldron and introductions of over 300 athletes, representing service teams from the United States and five allied countries. Country music singer and songwriter Hunter Hayes will welcome athletes to Tampa Bay and ignite the night performing his Grammy nominated hits for the crowd.

Hailed as a "force to be reckoned with" by the *Huffington Post*, multi-platinum selling recording artist HUNTER HAYES has accumulated over 40 award nominations and wins, including five Grammy nominations, a People's Choice Favorite Male Country Artist award and a CMA New Artist of the Year award. He recently released his first official single in three years, "Heartbreak," which *Paste* described as "a love-song's curveball at the traditional breakup narrative."

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The Louisiana-native's 2x multi-platinum debut album *Hunter Hayes* has accumulated nearly one billion on-demand streams in the US alone and produced multiple gold and platinum certified tracks including his 5x multi-platinum single, "Wanted." The smash hit received a GRAMMY nomination for "Best Country Solo Performance" in 2013 and became his first No. 1 single on the country airplay charts, solidifying the multi-instrumentalist as the youngest solo male artist to top Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart in over 40 years. Hayes is currently out on the road for his headlining *Closer To You* tour and has several performances and appearances scheduled during CMA Fest June 6-9 in Nashville.

Press Contact: Mary Catherine Rebrovick | MaryCatherine@wmg.com | 615.214.1412

Closing Ceremony

At the Closing Ceremony – after 10 days of inspirational competition – the community will again come together to applaud and celebrate individual and team performances, including the distribution of the coveted "heart of the team" award. To commemorate the festivities, multi-platinum country artist Sara Evans will entertain crowds with hits from nearly two decades. Closing Ceremony will take place on Sunday, June 30 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 at AMALIE Arena.

Multi-platinum entertainer SARA EVANS is at the top of her game. As the fifth most-played female artist at country radio in nearly the last two decades with five No. 1 singles including "No Place That Far," "Suds In The Bucket," "A Real Fine Place To Start," "Born to Fly," and "A Little Bit Stronger," which spent 2 weeks in the top spot and was certified platinum by the R.I.A.A., Sara thrills audiences across the U.S. playing close to 100 shows each year and in 2018 headlined the "CMT Next Women of Country Tour." Her "stunning, country voice" (*Rolling Stone*) has earned her the prestigious Academy of Country Music Top Female vocalist accolade as well as numerous American Music Awards, Billboard Music Awards, Country Music Association, CMT and Grammy Awards nominations. In addition, the CMA awarded Video of the Year honors for her hit chart-topping single, "Born to Fly" from her double-platinum album of the same name. Evans' discography also includes the platinum-selling studio albums *Real Fine Place* and *Restless* as well as the gold-certified projects *Stronger* and *No Place That Far*.

Sara continues to forge a bold, creative path with the launch of [Born To Fly Records](#) and her eighth studio album, [Words](#), which debuted at #2 on Billboard's Top Country Albums Chart. The project has been dubbed the album of her lifetime that "captures an artist in full musical flight" (*Associated Press*) and was named among *Billboard* and *Rolling Stone's* favorite country albums of 2017. This year brings several exciting, new projects, including *The Barker Family Band*, an EP recorded with her daughter Olivia Barker and son Avery Barker as both children embark on their own solo music careers, and a new solo album from Evans as well.

Press Contact: Cindy Hunt | cindy.hunt@monarchpublicity.com | 615.429.2203

Tickets for Opening and Closing Ceremonies go on sale Friday, May 31 at 10:00 AM at all Ticketmaster outlets or Ticketmaster.com. Tickets are priced at \$15.00 per person per event. Prices do not include service charges.

Please visit AmalieArena.com for more information about the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, to plan your visit, or to gain more information about directions, parking and dining options.

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About the DoD Warrior Games:

The Warrior Games will be held in Tampa Bay, June 21-30, and **all athletic competitions are FREE and open to the public.** The Paralympic-style athletic events will be held at venues throughout the community, including AMALIE Arena, Tampa Convention Center, Clearwater's Long Aquatic Center and University of South Florida.

The Warrior Games were established in 2010 to demonstrate the incredible potential of wounded, ill and injured service members. U.S. Special Operations Command and the Tampa Bay area are co-hosting the 2019 Warrior Games and will feature 14 sporting events with over 300 athletes representing teams from the U.S. Air Force, Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and U.S. Special Operations Command, as well as representatives from our ally nations, including the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Denmark and The Netherlands.

Learn more about the Warrior Games at DODWarriorGames.com.

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