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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 6, 2009

**MILITARY WOMEN – BRAVE YET BURNED AND ILL-EQUIPPED
Women in the front lines sacrifice femininity to serve their country,
Operation Courage study shows.**

It's hard to imagine that buying lotion or lipgloss could be a matter of life or death, but it is if you are serving in hostile territory. Servicewomen interviewed by Operation Courage Is Beautiful shared their struggle to preserve their femininity amidst a male-dominated culture and skin-scorching Iraqi heat where visiting local stores for beauty supplies might literally kill you.

Servicewomen rely almost exclusively on care packages from friends and family to provide for their skincare and beauty needs. One military woman interviewed stated that the military usually provides only standard-issue products that pale in comparison to those available to the average American woman. Patronizing local stores can endanger both locals and soldiers, especially in areas where anti-American hostilities run high. Due to safety precautions, such visits are often discouraged or restricted.

“We receive care packages regularly from different organizations and communities showing their love and support for us,” says First Class Petty Officer Yeoman Heather L. Diaz-Keane, a San Diego native currently serving in Iraq. **“However, most of the packages where we receive hygiene products are usually fairly gender neutral. Something as simple as a favorite scented soap or lotion can make the biggest difference in how you feel about yourself... So what others view as ‘frivolous’ is really a morale and self-esteem booster for us.”**

A recent article on military women by Glamour magazine sparked letters of support from the forefront. One wrote to the editor, **“[My friends and I] have been wearing this potato sack of a uniform for 15 months.... I do not remember how to put on makeup or do my hair! Can you find it in your hearts to help?”**

“The response to Operation Courage Is Beautiful has been overwhelmingly positive,” said Melissa Lo, Marketing Director at StyleSynch.com. **“The servicewomen we interviewed had entire lists of items they wished they**

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had at the forefront. Deep conditioners and SPF protection topped the charts – risk of sunburn is high and the dry heat can be unforgiving in the Middle East.”

Operation Courage is a not-for-profit community project with a mission to send care packages to women at the forefront, outfitted with much needed beauty care products. The packages demonstrate the support from communities and companies back home and help boost morale in a tough job. The effort is spearheaded by San Diego native Cindy Chan, Founder & CEO of StyleSynch.com and engages a network of volunteers and sponsors from community organizations and corporations.

“StyleSynch is about empowering women,” shared Ms. Chan. **“We’re proud to be leading an effort to recognize the contributions of these heroines and to be bringing some joy to their service life.”** Ms. Chan said. **“As a 2nd generation San Diegan entrepreneur, I strive to connect my business with lifting up others and giving back to the community that has given me so much.”**

StyleSynch is a women and minority-owned small business revolutionizing the way women relate to their tech gear by bringing style to every girl’s digital life.

UPDATE 10/5/2009

OCIB Care Package Drive in San Diego, CA – Nov. 1 through Nov. 8, 2009

Operation Courage is holding a drive where individuals and organizations can drop off beauty & skin supply donations in San Diego. For details visit website to find out locations, what to donate, hours of operation and other information.

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To obtain more information, visit <http://operationcourage.org>. To schedule an interview with Cindy Chan, CEO of StyleSynch.com, please call 858.225.9892 or email Courage@StyleSynch.com

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