

For Immediate Release:

April 14, 2003

Contact:

David Vossbrink, (408) 277-3515

Communications Director

**Mayor Gonzales Announces Community Partnership to
Aid Families of Reservists**
*Call for action to help families and dependents
left behind by military activation*



San José ---- San José Mayor Ron Gonzales, in partnership with military, community, religious, and business organizations, announced today a new community-wide effort to provide support to families of reservists and National Guard members who have been called up for active duty for the war.

“We don’t know when our troops can come back home to their families in San José,” said Gonzales. “Now more than ever, we must make sure as a community that the families of these troops are taken care of here on the home front.”



Approximately 200 San José reservists have been called up for active duty this year according to the California National Guard and military reserves. Many of these reservists have had to leave dependent families behind without adequate assurances for their ongoing support.

In collaboration with the military, businesses, and community organizations, the mayor announced a new partnership led by the City of San José to generate community support to help families left behind that may need assistance.



Pictured above: Mayor Gonzales; General James Combs; Councilmember Forrest Williams;

Don Demers; Police Chief Bill Lansdowne; Randy Sekany

Although some employers, such as the City of San José, have committed to paying activated reservists their regular salaries while they are serving the nation, others have not been able to do so. The mayor urged employers of activated reservists to do all they can to help support their families during this period of worry and uncertainty.

Early participants in this community call to action are:

- City of San José has designated its 24/7 Customer Service Call Center as a central information hub for residents, businesses, and community organizations to call and receive information on where to donate money or goods and services. The San José Call Center has an extensive list of contact information to help the community. The number to call is (408) 277-4000.
- American Red Cross, Santa Clara Valley Chapter has established a fund that helps families in need in Santa Clara County. All financial donations designated for local uses will go to that fund and contributions will be disbursed only to Santa Clara County families.



A check from the Santa Clara County Chapter of Red Cross for \$3,500

- San José Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce has committed to contact all its member businesses and urge them to support families of reservists and to ask employers to provide supplement compensation where possible.
- San José Police Officers Association has pledged \$5000.
- The Assyrian Church of the East has pledged \$5000
- Safeway Stores has pledged \$3500.



Mayor Gonzales and Bishop Soro from the Assyrian Church of the East who presented a check in the amount of \$5,000

Mayor Gonzales also called upon other California mayors to take similar steps in their communities.

“One of the best ways we can support our troops is to make sure their families are OK at home, wherever they live,” he said. “When they finally come home, we want our residents in uniform to worry only about who to hug first. I am confident that the leadership and commitment in every community will join us in this effort



Mayor Gonzales with Tina Ybarra and baby Ybarra