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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**JEWISH FOUNDATION FOR RIGHTEOUS & KEAN UNIVERSITY HOST
VETERANS DAY AND KRISTALLNACHT VIRTUAL EVENT**

**PROGRAM WILL HIGHLIGHT ONLY AMERICAN SOLDIER RECOGNIZED AS
“RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS”**

UNION, New Jersey – In partnership with The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous (JFR), the Holocaust Center of Kean University will honor the memory of Master Sgt. Roddie Edmonds this Veterans Day at a virtual event on Nov. 9 at 7:00 p.m., in honor of which is also the anniversary of Kristallnacht.

To date, Edmonds is the only U.S. soldier who has been recognized as “Righteous Among the Nations” by Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust Remembrance Center.

The program will begin with a screening of the JFR’s award-winning documentary, “Following the Footsteps of My Father,” which recounts Edmonds’ heroism through the lens of his son, Pastor Chris Edmonds as well as several of the 200 American Jewish POWs that the late Master Sgt saved.

Participants will then hear from Pastor Edmonds, who will recount not only the story of his father’s heroism but also of how the younger Edmonds discovered his father’s heroism years after his passing.

On Dec. 19, 1944, Master Sgt. Edmonds was captured by the German Army during the Battle of the Bulge and sent to the Stalag IXA prisoner of war camp. As the highest-ranking American soldier in the camp, Edmonds was responsible for the camp’s 1,292 American POWs. The camp’s commandant ordered Edmonds to identify the Jewish soldiers in order to separate them from the other prisoners. Instead, Edmonds refused, and when the German commandant placed his pistol against Edmonds’ head, demanding that he identify the Jewish soldiers,

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Edmonds responded, “We are all Jews here,” refusing to identify the Jewish soldiers thereby saving their lives.

He survived 100 days of captivity, and returned home after the war, but never spoke of his actions. Edmonds passed away in 1985, and only long after did his son, Pastor Edmonds begin to put together the story of his father’s heroism during the war. Posthumously, Edmond’s actions have been recognized by Yad Vashem, who have conferred him with the designation “Righteous Among the Nations.”

“As the only U.S. Soldier to have been recognized as ‘Righteous Among the Nations,’ it is incredibly befitting that we pay our respect to Master Sgt. Edmonds’ outstanding deeds in honor of both Veteran’s Day and the anniversary of Kristallnacht,” said JFR Executive Vice President Stanlee Stahl. “Putting his life on the line, his display of courage enabled over 200 Jewish soldiers to return home and build their families and lives. His legacy will forever stand tall in the histories told of the Righteous.”

The event will be free and open to the community. Advance registration is required at <https://tinyurl.com/JFRKeanU9Nov22>.

The JFR continues its work of providing monthly financial assistance to 120 aged and needy Righteous Gentiles, living in 12 countries. Since its founding, the JFR has provided more than \$42 million to aged and needy rescuers – helping to repay a debt of gratitude on behalf of the Jewish people to these noble men and women. Its Holocaust teacher education program has become a standard for teaching the history of the Holocaust and educating teachers and students about the significance of the Righteous as moral and ethical exemplars. For more information, visit <https://www.jfr.org/>.