

# Guard and Reserve employers recognized for superior support

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**RENO** – The Nevada Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Committee recognized more than 40 private and public sector organizations during the Annual ESGR Employer Recognition Day and Award Ceremony at the Nevada Air Guard base in Reno in May. The event provided an opportunity for ESGR and the National Guard to display its appreciation for the employers' generous support of reserve component employees' military service.

The event was hosted by the Nevada ESGR Committee and Guard officials and gave employers an opportunity to experience their traditional Guardsmen's working environment and see their equipment.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is a Department of Defense organization that promotes cooperation and understanding between reserve component service members and their civilian employers.

One company, NV Energy, received the Extraordinary Employer Support Award this year. The award recognizes sustained employer support of the Guard and Reserve. NV Energy is the first Nevada-based company to receive the award (see related article).

Two companies, Arcata Associates and JT3, received ESGR's Pro Patria award. The Pro Patria award is presented annually by the ESGR State Committee to the organizations that have demonstrated the greatest support to the Guard and Reserve through their leadership and practices.

Twenty five organizations received the Above and Beyond Award this year. The award recognizes employers at the local level who have gone above and beyond the minimum requirements of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights law.

Eighteen organizations were awarded the Seven Seals Award in 2013. The award is the broadest, most inclusive given by ESGR. It recognizes organizations and entities that have promoted and supported the ESGR mission.



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Representatives from the organizations recognized by the Nevada National Guard and the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve inspect the Nevada Air Guard's firefighting equipment during the annual ESGR Recognition Day and Award Ceremony at the Nevada Air Guard base in Reno in May.

Also recognized were the 10 Nevada-based companies nominated for the 2013 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award, the most prestigious ESGR award. It is presented annually to 15 of the nation's top employers in a special ceremony in Washington, D.C., in September. Arcata Associates and JT3 have been named as semi-finalists for the Freedom Award. The final 15 winners will be announced this summer.

Employer Recognition Day began with representatives from the supportive organizations receiving a base tour and welcome speech from wing commander Col. Jeffrey Burkett and Nevada ESGR chairman retired Col. Dave Cantrell. Participants then moved on to view static displays of Air and Army National Guard equipment. The displays included an Air National Guard C-130, an Army National Guard Humvee, and two Army National Guard helicopters.

Attendees then toured the Air National Guard firehouse and learned about the station's response capability and firefighting/rescue equipment. The employers also learned about the Security Forces' equipment and handled and viewed the squadron's weapons and gear.

After the tour, the employers enjoyed a lunch and award ceremony at the air base's

dining facility and listened to speeches and presentations from Nevada Adjutant General Brig. Gen. Bill Burks and Alex Baird, the assistant secretary of defense for Reserve Affairs.

Guest speakers also included Nevada Guard officers Lt. Col. Koby Harding, Maj. Justin Galli and Capt. Michael Bordallo. All recently returned from deployments in Afghanistan.

According to ESGR officials, many civilian employers had demonstrated their support of their reserve-component service members this year by paying the difference between a deployed service member's military and usual civilian pay. Other employers sent numerous care packages to their Guard and Reserve employees while they were deployed and established human resource polices that provide superior benefits to service members.

Any Guardsman or reservist or reserve-component military spouse can nominate their civilian employer for an ESGR Patriot Award. After receiving an initial Patriot Award from ESGR, organizations can receive subsequent awards from the Nevada ESGR Committee, including the prestigious Pro Patria and Above and Beyond awards, based on the respective organization's degree of support.

For additional information on ESGR, visit [www.esgr.mil](http://www.esgr.mil). ■