

News Release

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Governor Branstad Presents 2011 Iowa ESGR Governor's Awards - Signs proclamation designating Iowa Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve Week -

DES MOINES, Iowa – September 12, 2011 – Three Iowa employers received the Iowa ESGR Governor's Awards in a ceremony today by Governor Terry Branstad. Dick Rue, chairman of the Iowa Committee of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), and other ESGR officials joined in the ceremony. In addition, Governor Branstad signed a Proclamation designating the week of Sept. 18 – 24 as Iowa Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week.

The Iowa ESGR Governor's Award recognizes the exemplary ways Iowa employers support their National Guard and Reserve employees. One award is presented to employers in three categories: large employer, small employer and the public sector.

Recipients of the 2011 Iowa ESGR Governor's Awards are:

- Large Employer: The Principal Financial Group – Des Moines
- Small Employer: Davis Brown Law Firm – Des Moines
- Public Sector: Buena Vista County Sheriff's Department – Buena Vista County

In addition to presenting the Iowa ESGR Governor's Awards, Governor Branstad signed a Proclamation designating September 18 – 24 as Iowa Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week.

In signing the proclamation, Governor Branstad said, "Iowa's National Guard and Reserve forces serve our state and the country with distinction, responding when called upon on every front in overseas contingency operations, as well as to the humanitarian emergencies we experience in our own state. By supporting our guardsmen and reservists, employers across Iowa are also helping to advance freedom and democracy around the world. That's why we're proud to sign this proclamation today and to recognize these three Iowa companies with the Iowa Freedom Award."

"We are proud of our National Guard and Reserve military members and stand in awe of the sacrifice they make for all of us," said Dick Rue, chairman of the Iowa Committee of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. "At the same time we recognize that employers are

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making sacrifices as well. This year's Iowa Governor's Award recipients are all companies that were selected to be advanced as the Iowa nominees for the Secretary of Defense's National Freedom Award the highest recognition given Nationally by ESGR to employers for their support of their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve. As the result of these nominations, The Principal Financial Group was selected as one of the 15 national winners of the National Freedom Award and will be recognized at a special award banquet in Washington, D.C. on September 22, 2011. We thank Governor Branstad for signing a Proclamation designating Iowa ESGR week because it is important that the support of all Iowa employers of Guard and Reserve members be recognized.”

Guard, Reservists or their spouses can nominate their employers for an ESGR award at www.iowaesgr.org.

ESGR is a Department of Defense agency tasked with gaining and maintaining employer support for those who serve in the National Guard and Reserve. ESGR achieves this mission by providing educational, consulting and mediation services to current and potential employers of Guard and Reserve members. More information about Iowa ESGR is available at: www.iowaesgr.org

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L-R photo description: Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds, Dick Rue (ESGR State Chair), Dan Houston (The Principal Financial Group), Courtney Strutt (Davis Brown Law Firm), Gary Launderville (Buena Vista County Sheriff's Department), Governor Terry Branstad.