



VOLUME 8, ISSUE 4
FALL 2008

*A quarterly newsletter for
Iowa ESGR's dedicated volunteers*

Freedom Award Nominations Are Now Being Accepted

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve has opened the nomination season for the 2009 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. National Guard and Reserve members and their families are eligible and encouraged to nominate employers who have gone above and beyond in their support of military employees.

Nominations will be accepted until **January 18, 2009**. The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their outstanding support of their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

The 2009 recipients will be announced in the spring and honored in Washington, D.C. at the 14th annual Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award ceremony September 17, 2009. Recipients of the 2008 Freedom Award met with President George W. Bush and Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England. Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Dr. David Chu presented the awards at a ceremony attended by members of Congress and senior government and military officials.



Iowa company Augustine & Sons was a 2007 recipient of a Freedom Award (pictured at left). Augustine & Sons were one of fifteen winners chosen from more than 1000 nomination forms. The company was acknowledged for exceeding the requirements of the law in many ways providing support to the employee 1SGT Matthew Strasser and his family while 1SGT Strasser was serving in Afghanistan.

Please spread the word of this fantastic recognition program! Check out www.freedomaward.mil or www.IowaESGR.org to complete a nomination form.

From the Chairman

ESGR...FRONT AND CENTER

Time for another column for the newsletter. Gosh, seems like I just finished one and sent it off to Amy Smit and Carol Bodensteiner to correct all my mistakes and make it look good. (Aren't they doing a great job?)

As I sit here in front of the computer screen trying to collect my thoughts, I can't help but look back to our Iowa Freedom Awards held in September in Governor Culver's office at the state capital. Just like with most of the innovations we "coin," we swam upstream and took a risk at yet another attempt to get the Iowa State Committee of Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve front and center to benefit and bring attention to our work. Those three employers, Musco Lighting, of Oskaloosa, Radio Communications, of Waterloo, and Howard County were great representatives for the "first ever" Iowa Freedom Awards. The event was well covered by central Iowa media representatives and the story was picked up by well over a dozen local stations and newspapers around the state. We plan to present those awards again in 2009.



Area committees from around the state held important proclamation signings following Governor Chet Culver's lead and here again our work was featured in important coverage by news media. Thanks again to the area committee leaders that grabbed the ball and ran with it.

Awards and recognition are a critical component of our "going up stream PREVENTION" strategy. The education efforts of this organization are truly world class. The partnerships that have been established with Iowa Workforce Development, the Association of Business and Industry, the Iowa Society for Human Resource Management and the Employers Council of Iowa are proving to be highly effective presentations to area and regional employers, to be sure. In addition, when a civilian military member takes the time to nominate their employer for a patriotic employer award another important component of the program kicks into gear. Without the nomination, it is a huge lost opportunity. Just to be clear, let's make sure everyone understands the process.

The "Patriotic Employer" Award is an award given to supportive managers, supervisors, or the company in general to show appreciation from their military-member employee. Every employer that is nominated for this award receives recognition and will receive a certificate and a Patriot pin. It all begins with that nomination.

There are some key points asked on the submission form as well as a spot for a narrative. Frankly, we often need to help with examples of the narrative. The more that is written the better and it is this narrative that is used for higher award consideration. The key points for the nomination include the maintenance of benefits, the continued communication, the recognition of military service, some continued compensation and the over all support including the family. I've suggested in the past that beside the military outreach information and the calling card of the unit contact, we consider including several examples of great narratives on our website. Check them out under military members and then click patriotic employer awards.

It's getting close to holiday time, and I'm always reminded of how much great volunteers mean to organization. Please know that Cari and I send our warmest regards and best wishes to you and your families. Thanks again for all that you do.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barry Spear". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

What's Happening with Iowa ESGR

By Al Enright, Executive Director

I would like to start my comments in this Fall Newsletter by thanking all the volunteers who have been busy with Lunch and Learns, Awards, Boss Lifts, Briefings with employers and military members and getting Statement of Support signings. We have been busy since the last newsletter. I appreciate all the volunteer's efforts in spreading the ESGR word. Your state office staff has been busy manning booths at The Iowa Bar Association, the Iowa Bankers Association, Iowa Workforce Development Conference, and The Society for Human Resource Management conference. We have made many connections with employers during these conferences and partnered with Department of Labor to do some breakout training sessions during some of these conferences. Thanks to Tony and his group at DOL for being proactive.

Deployments are still happening in Iowa with all reserve forces. ESGR has been attending the deployment processes and briefing many military members and their families on USERRA and ESGR. The Iowa military leadership tells us that they see around 15% of the force on active duty at any given time. Hopefully the deployments will only be 12 months long and predictable (no short notice) for all involved.

Freedom Awards nomination period is now open (through Jan 18th). I am asking all of you to spread the word to the military members that this is a National awards program and they should nominate deserving employers for this prestigious award. Military members can go to our website at www.freedomaward.mil or www.iowaESGR.org to nominate employers for both awards program. Encourage them to do that.

Looking ahead, plans for our annual conference are well on the way. Our conference will be held on the **1st and 2nd of May 2009** in Des Moines. Please mark you calendar and plan on attending this very important event.

See YOUR Area Highlighted Here!

A goal of this quarterly newsletter is to share ideas and best practices with all of ESGR's volunteers. It is also a great place to post photos and share success with your friends in other Areas.

If you have a story to tell or photos to share, please email them to Amy Smit at amy.smit@drake.edu so that YOU can be included in the next quarterly newsletter!



CHECK OUT PHOTOS FROM AREA ACTIVITIES ON PAGES 5-7!

Did You Know?

**The National Guard will be celebrating its
372nd birthday in December, 2008.**



Need Assistance?

Please contact your Area Chair or State ESGR committee if you have questions or need assistance.

Area Chairs

Area 1: Pat Denzer (712) 279-3230

Area 2: Francis Clark (712) 328-2600

Area 3: Tom Manley (712) 262-3030

Area 4: Dave Campbell (515) 554-5772

Area 5: Dr. Susan Dawson (319) 226-2014

Area 6: vacant

Area 7: Marty Graber (319) 372-1896

Area 8: Tom Flynn (563) 583-6494 ext 20

Area 9: Harry Cockrell (563) 324-1028

Area 10: Reggie Randau (641)-672-0143

Area 11: Rich Burchett (712) 755-5153

Area 12: Mark Stanton (641) 421-9563

State ESGR Committee

State Chairman: Barry Spear (515) 964-8084

Vice Chairman: Rob Kelly (515) 490-9364

Executive Director: Al Enright (800) 294-6607, ext 4192

Deputy Director: Becky Coady (800) 294-6607, ext 2757

Office Manager/Webmaster: Doug Enright (800) 294-6607, ext 2742

State Ombudsman Director: Tom Smock (319) 822-7887

State Public Affairs Director: Carol Bodensteiner 515-224-4582

State Employer Outreach Director: Tom Meyer 515-965-8008

State Military Services Director: Dick Rue (515) 238-3931

State Training Director: Rex McClafin (515) 556-1053

State Boss Lift Coordinator: Eric Idehen (515) 237-5133



Have you visited the ESGR website?

The ESGR website is full of information and resources for volunteers, service members and employers, including:

- Patriotic Employer Nomination forms
- Questions & Answers for Employers & Employees
- Register your company for a Statement of Support
- Download an Employer Resource Guide
- Volunteer Best Practices
- Articles from Iowa newspapers about ESGR

www.IowaESGR.org

Please pass this newsletter on to others who may be interested in the ESGR mission.

To subscribe to this quarterly newsletter, email Douglas.Enright@us.army.mil

PATRIOTIC EMPLOYER AWARDS



*Goodrich Corporation Turbine Fuel Technologies,
Carroll*



Waterloo Fire Rescue, Waterloo



Mary Greely Medical Center Dietary Services, Ames



Allen Memorial Hospital, Waterloo

*Iowa ESGR is proud to present
more than 200
Patriotic Employer Awards
each year!*



IOWA FREEDOM AWARDS



The Iowa Freedom Awards are the highest recognition given in Iowa to employers for their support of employees who serve in the National Guard & Reserve.

The Iowa Freedom Awards were presented for first time by Governor Culver on September 9, 2008

Award winners pictured: (clockwise): Radio Communications, Howard County, and Musco Lighting receive their Iowa Freedom Awards.

IOWA EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT



Left: The Printer Inc

Right: Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc



ESGR Week



Left: Governor Chet Culver presents the ESGR Week Proclamation

Below: The City of Rockwell proclaims ESGR Week and receives a Patriotic Employer Award.

**"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."
-Henry Ford**

