



More Than 200 Iowa Employers Participate In First-Ever Mass Statement Of Support Signing

Governor Culver leads event in Des Moines, Simultaneous events held around the state

(DES MOINES) – More than 200 Iowa employers participated on November 9th, 2007 in the state’s first-ever group signing of Statements of Support for their military employees. At the State Historical Building in Des Moines, Governor Chet Culver took the lead in signing a Statement of Support for his military employees. Around the state, simultaneous group Statement of Support signings were held in Davenport, Dubuque, Mason City, Carroll, Sioux City, Spencer and Fort Madison.



“We recognize the sacrifice employers make,” Governor Chet Culver said. “That’s why we’re proud to sign a Statement of Support today. It’s also why we took the step during this last session to sign into law HF 849, a law that gives preferential treatment in government contracts to companies that employ civilian military members.” Governor Culver also outlined other measures the state has enacted – financial aid to injured veterans, financial aid to veterans to purchase homes, and college education benefits for the National Guard, among others.

After Governor Culver signed an Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Five Star Statement of Support, other employers signed statements of support on behalf of their companies. A Statement of Support is a formal pledge by the employer that their company will abide by state and federal laws and will support their employees who serve as members of the Guard and Reserve. Signing a Statement of Support sends a positive message to employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve and sets the example for other employers.

“We are proud of our National Guard and Reserve military members and in awe of the sacrifice they make for all of us,” said Barry Spear, chairman of the Iowa Committee of ESGR. “At the same time we recognize that employers are making sacrifices as well. ESGR works to educate and communicate with employers about the law that protects military employee jobs. When employers sign Statements of Support, it sends a message to our voluntary civilian military that their jobs are secure.

Assistant Secretary of Labor Charles Ciccolella confirmed that Iowa is well ahead of other states in the country in resolving conflicts that arise. “Iowa does an excellent job of working with employers and military employees to prevent problems from arising,” Ciccolella said. “And when a problem does come up, Iowa is 40% faster than other states in resolving the conflict.”

Area Chairs for Iowa ESGR

Area 1: Pat Denzer (712) 279-3230

Area 3: Tom Manley (712) 262-3030

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

Area 7: Marty Graber (319) 372-1896

Area 9: Harry Cockrell (563) 324-1028

Area 11: Rich Burchett (712) 755-5153

Area 2: Kipp Harris (712) 243-6777

Area 4: Dave Campbell (515) 554-5772

Area 6: Vacant

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

Area 10: Vacant

Area 12: Mark Stanton (641) 421-9563

State ESGR Committee:

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State Public Affairs Director:

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State Employer Outreach Director:

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State Awards Director:

Gary Kinsinger
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State Military Services Director:

Vacant

State Training Director:

Rex McClaflin
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State Bosslift Coordinator:

Eric Idehen
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VOLUNTEERS ARE THE LIFEBLOOD OF ESGR

Barry Spear, Iowa State Chair

Have you heard the saying that “music makes the world go “round”? Well, volunteers make the music in our world of Iowa ESGR. **YOU ARE THE LIFEBLOOD.** Absolutely nothing happens in our organization without the spade work and heavy lifting from volunteers. We are so very fortunate to have Al Enright, Becky Coady and Doug Enright in the ESGR office at Camp Dodge, but they will be the first to tell you, you are the spokes in the wheel.

Now that said, there are differences in volunteers. Would you agree? (Just like there are differences in chairmen, I’m reminded). I had an old coach (come to think about it he was younger than I am now... sheesh!) tell me that our team was only as good or as strong as the weakest member. Man was that guy ever wise.

Consider your definition of what your role and responsibility is in the Iowa Committee of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. Do you think that your area chair would agree with you? It’s always wise to do a reality check once in a while so as you do your own self evaluation, please understand I know that you are a **VOLUNTEER.** I’ve learned long ago that a person’s time is their most precious commodity and it is not endless.

When you “google” volunteerism, most authors talk and relate that to raising funds. Every not-for-profit organization needs money. It’s almost like it’s a part of the organizational DNA. Iowa ESGR is not a 501 c-3 not-for profit. We are volunteers, true, but the organization is actually a government organization. That doesn’t mean however we are cash rich. To the contrary we are held to a very meager budget and much of what we do comes from our ability to raise money in our sister organization Iowa ESGR Inc. I know that it’s past the end of the year when most folks take stock of their charitable intentions, but a small contribution to Iowa ESGR Inc. would certainly be appreciated and our conference is coming in April. Please consider \$25, \$50 or \$100. There is never enough money to do the conference the way your leadership would like it done.

I’m really looking forward to our upcoming State Conference. We have so much to celebrate. It has truly been a great year in the state organization and when you see the list of accomplishments it’s going to **BLOW YOU AWAY.** When one of us “wins” we all win and so we will **ALL CELEBRATE.**

In conclusion, I have a favor to ask. Would you consider doing three basic things for me in the next 30 days? First, identify and invite a business leader to attend the conference as your guest. This would be someone that you know supports our mission and would be a great candidate to recruit to the committee. Second, identify a company that hasn’t yet signed a Statement of Support and get that business leader to sign one. Lastly, identify the largest business oriented organization in your community and get us on the calendar to speak. (We’ll do you proud)

Keep up the great work. Do your part. See you in April. Barry

REMINDER!!! REMINDER!!! REMINDER!!! REMINDER!!! REMINDER!!!

The annual Iowa ESGR conference is coming up fast!!

The conference will be held on April 4-5, 2008
At the Holiday Inn - Merle Hay in Johnston, IA

New member training begins at 10:00 AM on Friday, April 4th.

Opening ceremony and welcome comments from Barry Spear, State Chair
Begins at 11:30 AM.

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE CONFERENCE

DETAILS TO FOLLOW

More Photos from the State-wide November 9th Statement of Support Signing



Above: Area 4 signing event.
Below: Area 4 employer discusses statement of support with co-worker



Above: Area 4 employers signing statements of support in Des Moines. Below: Area 9 employers signing statements of support in Davenport.



Above right: Area 9 employers display their statements of support to the crowd.

Above left and immediate right: Area 8 employers sign statements of support at the Dubuque Chamber of Commerce



Notes from the Executive Director—Al Enright

Calendar year 2007 for our ESGR committee was a busy and productive year. We have grown with some great new members and accomplished a track record that has National attention.

Our employer symposiums have been very beneficial to employers in our state and the Human Resource community has thanked us numerous times for our presentations around the state. Several employers have linked to our website to expose their employment opportunities to Guard and Reserve personnel.

Our Statement of Support Program has been improving and the November 9th event of a mass signing was a huge success throughout the state and drew the National Chairman of ESGR to come to Iowa to see our program.

Our strategic partnerships have blossomed from relationships to true partnerships with Association of Business and Industry (ABI), Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Iowa Bankers Association (IBA) and the Iowa Hospital Association (IHA) and we are currently working others to network with in educating all Iowans on the role of our organization and the role of our Reserve military. Public speaking events throughout the state were many and several more Iowans know about ESGR.

Our Boss Lift program was a huge success in 2007, taking over 100 employers to visit the military training of their employees and looks to be a repeat in 2008. Briefing of military personnel on USERRA and ESGR has been more active and effective and that has led to more “My Boss is a Patriot” awards being presented to our deserving employers. We even had our first National Freedom Award winner.

Civilian Employment Information (CEI) has picked up this past year. With the new Iowa law, it makes your ESGR office a verifying agent for businesses to get an edge on their competition for selling goods or services to State of Iowa agencies.

Our Reserve military is no longer a strategic reserve, but now an operational force. We are told, in the future, our reserve forces will be deployed 15% of the time if the world situation does not change. That means an employer has to plan on an employee in the Guard or Reserve, being gone approximately one out of every five to six years just for deployments. Some of our Iowa units have already started their second deployments for the Global War on Terrorism.

In my opinion, Iowa employers have been doing a tremendous job of taking care of their military employees and we need to thank them every chance we get. As we look ahead to 2008, with our annual conference just around the corner (April 4th and 5th), I hope all of you continue to keep focused on our mission and vision and I look for us all to do more of all the good things we have done in 2007. Your full-time office stands ready to assist and support you efforts in anyway we can. Thanks for your service to ESGR and your country.

ESGR Inc. Corner

Tom Tully and Dave Rogers would like to take this opportunity to remind the Iowa Committee Members of ESGR that IOWA ESGR, INC is fully accredited with the IRS and receiving pledges and donations. IOWA ESGR, INC is structured to provide all services and support as outlined in NCESGR's Financial Instruction that fall beyond the Committee's annual budget capabilities. Tom Tully's cell phone is 563-590-6565 and Dave Rogers' cell phone is 515-250-4163. Please contact either Tom or Dave if you'd like to contribute to Iowa ESGR Inc.

ESGR OUT AND ABOUT



Left: Area 8 Volunteers (Richard Rupp, John LuGrain, Lee Andre, Dan Nicholson) pose in front of the 1-133rd INF sign after the reverse SRP briefing in Dubuque. The 1-133rd served for 22 months, beginning their deployment in Sept/Oct 2005 and returning home in late July 2007. The 1-133rd Infantry earned the nickname "Ironman" as they completed the longest continuous deployment of any National Guard unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom, with 16 months of the deployment spent in Iraq.



1st Lieutenant Ben Graham, who served with the 1-133rd Infantry in Iraq during the 22-month deployment, presents a "My Boss is a Patriot" award to his supervisor, Kevin Whittington of Vital Support Systems. Vital Support Systems was very supportive of 1LT Graham during his deployment by sending multiple care packages to Iraq, kept in contact with his spouse, gave all entitlements as if he never left when he returned.



Barry Spear presents Governor Chet Culver with a Seven Seals award for his outstanding support of the Guard and Reserve. Governor Culver also signed a 5-Star Statement of Support during the November 9th event in Des Moines.



Right: Dave Campbell, Area 4 Chair, and Major Leon Wilson, Army Reserve, present "My Boss is a Patriot" awards to Jeff and Chris Jontz of Commercial Service Innovation. The nominator was SFC Michael Billings of the Army Reserve who is currently deployed.

ESGR OUT AND ABOUT



Area 9 ESGR representatives present Scott County Sheriff's Office the "My Boss is a Patriot" award, nominated by MSG Brent Kilburg who is currently deployed with the 113th CAV to Iraq. The Scott County Sheriff's Office also signed a 5-Star Statement of Support.

From left to right: Roger Roskens, ESGR; Harry Cockrell, ESGR; Cliff Tebbitt, Scott County Jail Administrator (also serves in the Iowa National Guard); Major Mike Brown, Scott County Chief Deputy; Dennis Conrad, Scott County Sheriff; Captain Dan Dirksen, Scout County Captain of Patrol Division; Terry Dell, ESGR.

Al Enright, Executive Director of Iowa ESGR, presents a "My Boss is a Patriot" award to Cargill Refinery BU in Eddyville, Iowa. The nominator is Troy Springer, Specialist in the Iowa National Guard and currently serving in Kosovo. In his nomination, SPC Springer stated that Cargill has been very supportive during his deployment. They have been willing to help out his wife and children with anything, kept his current salary going during deployment, maintained contact with Springer while in Kosovo, and sent several care packages to him.



From left to right: Jeri Spurgin, Kurt Gates, Al Enright, Christy Venne, and Grant Wolf.

Update from Cyberspace—Doug Enright, State Office Manager/Webmaster

The Iowa ESGR website (www.iowaesgr.org) has been steadily improving and getting notice from the business and military communities. Several more businesses have signed on to have their logos placed onto the website to show their support of current (and potentially future) military member employees. Military members have accessed the site to learn more about their rights under USERRA and submit their employers for awards. The "Members Only" section for the volunteers has been a success as well, providing information that is easily accessible. It will also be undergoing some changes in the future as I work with Rob Kelly to develop a "Best Practice" area for every functional area, as well as a general best practice area. To submit a "Best Practice", please email to Rob Kelly or myself so that we can categorize it accordingly.

Below are the website statistics from last quarter:

November: Total visits to the site: 963 (Average of 32 visits per day)
Total pages viewed within the site: 1901 (Average of 63 per day)

December: Total visits to the site: 931 (Average of 30 visits per day)
Total pages viewed within the site: 1764 (Average of 56 per day)

Note: We switched vendors to a local-based web hosting company in Des Moines at the end of October, so full statistics are only available for November and December.