



VOLUME 9, ISSUE 1
WINTER 2009

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

Employer Awards Critical to ESGR's Mission & Strategy

2009 is officially underway and volunteers throughout the state have been traveling to a variety of Iowa companies to present Patriotic Employer Awards. Since the Awards are a critical piece to the Prevention strategy, the beginning of a new year is a great time to refresh our memories on the importance of the awards.

The Basics:

- The Patriotic Employer Award can be awarded to an employer who has been supportive of the Guard/ Reserve.
- Any member of the Guard or Reserve can nominate an employer online.
- The Award recipient is presented with a certificate and lapel pin.
- Patriotic Employers are also eligible to receive higher levels of recognition based on their nomination (Pro Patria Award, Above & Beyond Award, State Chair Award, Area Chair Award).

Why It's Critical

A key component to ESGR's success is utilizing volunteers and education to help enhance the employer/employee relationship. By providing resources and information, ESGR can help keep the employer and employee informed of employee rights and policies. This enhanced communication can help strengthen the employer/employee working relationship, even despite the trials of deployments. Further, the opportunity for employees to acknowledge their company's support of the Guard & Reserve will only further that positive relationship.

It's Easy!

Everyone wins with the Patriotic Employer Awards, and it's an easy program to execute. Everyone can promote the program to Guard/ Reserve members. The online nomination form is quick and easy! Area volunteers then have an excellent opportunity to build new relationships and encourage Statements of Support during the Award presentation.

Check out pages 5 & 6 for recent Award recipients.

Hope to see more of you there next month!



*Who's employer will be next to receive a
Patriotic Employer Award?*

ESGR Mission: Gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law, and resolving conflicts through mediation.

From the Chairman

AWARDS ARE KEY TO OUR PREVENTION STRATEGY

First let me begin by profoundly expressing my appreciation and gratitude to the volunteers that have supported the prevention strategy we set into motion four years ago. In talking with unit commanders, our ESGR ombudsmen and the Department of Labor, there is no question but our work has had a positive impact on reducing the number of issues experienced by our civilian military members and their employers. Make no mistake that our organization stands ready to intervene and open meaningful communication between parties that disagree in an attempt to mitigate the conflict. That said, to reduce or eliminate the conflict upfront saves everyone from unneeded stress and loss of productivity.



I am so very proud of the partnerships we have established with professional organizations and associations across the State of Iowa. Their invitations to join them at conferences, educational offerings and their annual meetings are great testimonials to our work together. The work that we do with Iowa Workforce Development and the Department of Labor offering the lunch and learn seminars also have proven to be appreciated when the “after” surveys are reviewed.

As you know, the ESGR military liaisons assigned to the units across the state not only promote contact with our volunteers when necessary but also promote the civilian soldier nomination of the employer as a thank you for their support. We have had limited success in this area and I feel we are missing a huge opportunity. Do you realize that in almost every situation where local media are contacted when awards are being presented, they not only attend but it usually yields a positive story about ESGR? Do you see that when you present the award at the workplace or in a “group” presentation using the chamber or the local rotary club it is a great opportunity to recruit volunteers for the committee? Often times volunteering isn’t possible but the next question by the employer is “HOW CAN I HELP IN OTHER WAYS”? At that point, we miss an opportunity if we don’t identify our partner 501C-3 organization and encourage them to contact its leadership.

Award presentations are also huge opportunities to communicate how other employers are going way above and beyond. Sharing what other employers are doing in support of the civilian military members and their families raises the bar for all employers in Iowa. At the award presentation, it’s a great time to talk about the State of Iowa law that advantages employers that have signed a Statement of Support when bidding for business with the state.

Probably the very best time to get a statement of support signed is when our volunteers deliver an award. The office will help by preparing a SOS in advance so that the form is completely “READY TO GO”.

Don’t miss the opportunity to recruit another volunteer. Don’t pass up an SOS signing. Don’t be remiss and not mention our sister foundation for financial support. Lastly, don’t fall short and use the tools to be ALL YOU CAN BE. 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

Iowa ESGR Annual conference is set for the 1st and 2nd of May at the W. Des Moines Sheraton Hotel (1800 50th Street; Take the University Ave exit off I-80/I-35). This will be a great conference to share best practices and have some fun. We will be recognizing some outstanding employers at the Saturday Awards lunch this year. An e-mail with an RSVP will be out very soon, please mark you calendars to attend.

Partnerships with associations have been on the rise this past quarter: We have formed a partnership with the Association of builders and Contractors and the Employer Council of Iowa. We are working on several other organizations that have contacted us to come and meet with their board of directors and open the discussion on how we as Iowan's can work together.

Speaking engagements: If you have a Rotary club in your community and you would like the ESGR story told, please know that Al, Rob, or Barry are willing to come be the program.

**Thanks for your volunteer efforts!
It is appreciated by all of our customers -
employers and military members.**

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!

*“Act as if what you do makes
a difference. It does.”*

~William James

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: Carmine Boal (515) 964-3335

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: *vacant*

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 McClafflin (515) 556-1053

Check out the ESGR website today!

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

IOWA EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE

PATRIOTIC EMPLOYER AWARDS



*Recipient: Grundy County
Nominated by: Shawn Weber, Grundy County Engineering Technician, A Company of the 1-133rd Forward
Area: 5*



*Recipient: Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield of Iowa (Des Moines)
Nominated by: Shane Smith, a Wellmark employee and member of the Army National Guard
Area: 4*



*Recipient: ConAgra (Waterloo)
Nominated by: Anthony Stumbo, ConAgra employee, 1st Lt. with B Co 1-33rd Inf
Area: 5*



*Recipient: Lock & Dam 14 (Le Claire)
Nominated by: Eddie Sanchez, 480th Civil Affairs Bn, USAR
Area: 8*

PATRIOTIC EMPLOYER AWARDS



*Recipient: Manatt's (Brooklyn)
Nominated by: Martin Gallardo, Marine Corp Reserves
Area: 6*



*Recipient: City of Hartley
Nominated by: Brian Pals, Btry A 1-194th FA, ARNG
Area: 3*



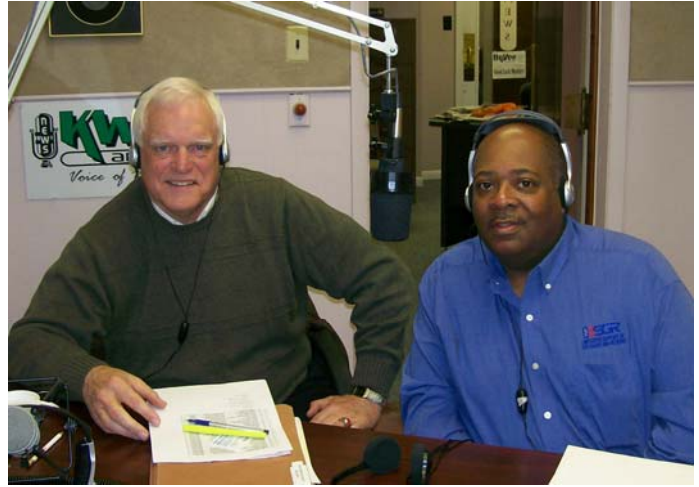
*Recipient: The Printer Inc (Des Moines)
Nominated by: Mark Walter, Navy Reserve
Area: 4*

IOWA EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT



Greg Monroe, Area 9, displays the signed Statement of Support with General Manager Dewayne Hopkins.



Area 9 volunteers Roger Roskens & Greg Monroe take a break from their interview to pose for a photo.

Prairie Radio Communications in Muscatine had a busy January morning with ESGR!

Not only did General Manager Dewayne “Hoppy” Hopkins sign a Statement of Support, he also interviewed Roger Roskens, ESGR Employer Outreach Director and Greg Monroe, ESGR Committee Member.

Both Roger and Greg represent Area 9.

OTHER MEDIA NEWS

ESGR Public Affairs Director, Carol Bodensteiner, was pleased to work with a Des Moines Register reporter on two ESGR stories. The reporter, Bill Petroski, worked on the articles since April 2007. ESGR worked closely with him to help him understand that the vast majority of employers support their military employees. He attended the ESGR Week proclamation signing with Governor Culver last September. He's attended one of our Lunch & Learn sessions for employers. We were fortunate to have him attend the Patriotic Employer award presentation at The Printer, Inc..

These articles could be used as a handout to employers you meet to demonstrate the value of understanding USERRA and working with ESGR.

Contact Carol if you would like copies of the articles.