

Musco Lighting receives Pro Patria Award

Mahaska County employer receives top state award for support of military employees

The Oskaloosa Herald (April 11, 2008)

DES MOINES —

Musco Lighting received the 2007 Pro Patria Award — the highest award in the State of Iowa — for their support of employees who serve in National Guard and Reserve military units. The Pro Patria Award is presented each year by the Iowa Committee of the Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve.

According to Iowa ESGR State Chairman Barry Spear, “Musco Lighting has demonstrated extraordinary support for their military employees and we are proud to present the Pro Patria Award in recognition of their efforts.”

Musco Lighting provided their corporate jet to fly to the East Coast, pick up nine soldiers and fly them back. These soldiers were stranded at the Philadelphia airport and could not get home for their leave. Musco rented a limousine, drove the soldiers to Dulles airport where the jet picked them up and returned them to Iowa and Kansas.



From left are Major Gen. Ron Dardis, Jim Gualtieri, Tom Shannon and Iowa ESGR State Chair Barry Spear. Gualtieri and Shannon were the Musco pilots who flew the private plane with the nine military members back from Pennsylvania to Minnesota and Iowa.

Civilian military members in the Guard and Reserve have their employment protected under Federal Law. The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act provides guidance on the rights and obligations of employees and employers with respect to military service. The Iowa ESGR annual awards are presented to employers who exceed the USERRA Requirements.

Each year, the Iowa ESGR selects the top employers from among those nominated by military employees to receive Above & Beyond Awards. The Above and Beyond award is given to a select number of employers throughout the state. Twenty employers were selected to receive the 2007 Above & Beyond Awards. These awards recognize employers that have gone above and beyond the legal requirements for granting leave and providing support for military duty by their employees.

From these Above & Beyond recipients, the ESGR selects one to receive the Pro Patria Award. The Pro Patria Award is presented annually by the state ESGR committee to the employer that has provided the most exceptional support of our national defense through leadership practices and personnel policies that support their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

“Today, 1.2 million Americans serve in the Guard and Reserve representing nearly one half of the nation’s military force,” Spear added. “The extended nature of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has put tremendous pressure on soldiers, their families and employers. Employers like Augustine & Sons that take extraordinary steps to support employees in the military service earn the respect of their military employees and families, and these employers deserve the recognition and respect of the country.”

The Department of Defense established Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve in 1972. The mission of ESGR is to gain and maintain active support from all public and private employers for the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve. ESGR volunteers provide free education, consultation, and if necessary mediation for employers of Guard and Reserve employees. Made up largely of volunteers, the ESGR has 150 volunteer members across Iowa. For more information about Iowa ESGR, www.iowaesgr.org.