

ESGR: Nominate your civilian employer

Its easy as 1,2,3 at
www.esgr.org

The National Committee of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) sponsors an awards program designed to recognize employers for employment policies and practices that are supportive of their employees' participation in the National Guard and Reserve. All employer recognition and awards originate from nominations by individual Reserve component members. Depending on the degree of support, the level of recognition rises to the "Employer Support Freedom Award," given by the Secretary of Defense. Employer awards include:

"My Boss is a Patriot" (MBIAP) Certificate of Appreciation

ESGR awards this certificate and a Patriot lapel pin on behalf of the Department of Defense. All members of the National Guard and Reserve forces are eligible to nominate their employers for the "Patriot Award" certificate. This employer recognition is the most frequently presented. A certificate will be given to all employers that are nominated. This nomination is subsequently used by the local ESGR Committee as the basis for consideration to receive higher level awards.

Local ESGR Committee Chair's Award

This award is given in limited numbers and presented annually by each ESGR Committee. It is designed to recognize those employers who have gone above and beyond the legal requirements for granting leave for military duty.

PRO PATRIA Award

It is presented to those employers who demonstrate exceptional support for our national defense by adopting personnel policies that make it easier for employees to participate in the National Guard and Reserve. Each committee may give only one PRO PATRIA annually.

Employer Support Freedom Awards

These awards, ESGR's most prestigious, are presented annually to an employer by the Secretary of Defense. It recognizes unique support to National Guard and Reserve employees. The nation's most supportive employers receive the awards at a ceremony held annually in November.

Who Is Eligible?

Employers qualify for recognition when they practice personnel policies that support employee participation in the National Guard and Reserve.

How do you nominate your employer?

The easiest way to nominate your employer is to use the "My Boss is A Patriot Award Form" form on the ESGR website. By pressing the "submit" option at the bottom, your nomination arrives at National ESGR Headquarters within moments. If you wish, you can print a copy of the nomination for record.

Copies of the nomination form can also be obtained from your local ESGR Committee or the National ESGR Headquarters or use the toll-free number, **(800) 336-4590**.

Look for applications in the publications you receive from military professional associations. The military associations are fully aware of the vital importance of employer and community support for the National Guard and Reserve. They periodically print ESGR Award applications to encourage participation in the ESGR Awards program by their members.

However you make your nomination, remember that it makes your employer eligible for the higher level awards. A little extra effort to provide details will help us to recognize and properly award the most outstanding employers.

What should you do if your employer's certificate doesn't arrive on time? Occasionally, a nomination

gets "lost" in the process. If your employer's certificate doesn't arrive after 45 days, please contact the Odyssey Imaging Group at 770-754-9900. Ask for the ESGR Awards Staff and they will be happy to check on the status for you.



Photo by Ms. Jennifer West

Norman L. Churchill, chairman for New Mexico Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

"We've learned most employers at the top and throughout the organizations are patriotic and want to do the right thing," Norm Churchill, chairman for NMESGR, said. "But, some employers simply do not know or understand the federal law protecting the employment rights of individuals called to serve their country. That's when ESGR can step in to help inform company human resources staff, supervisors and others involved."

"We're an awareness organization," he explained. "We are proactive in that we have several different activities that support the effort to make employers and Guard and Reserve aware of the federal law that gives the Guard or Reserve member their jobs back once they return, and that's the key."

For more information regarding the overall ESGR program, contact Norm Churchill at (505) 296-2556 or Email him at: twochurchills@cs.com

Maj. Melissa Sunnygard-Couse is the ESGR ombudsman for the 150th Fighter Wing at 853-7672.