



July 2013



Welcome to Colorado ESGR. Our purpose is to have an informative newsletter that will educate, inform, and promote service by and to ESGR while fulfilling our mission of supporting Employers, Guard/Reserve members, Military and Veteran Employment Initiatives and our COESGR Volunteers.

**Congratulations to Colorado Springs Utilities and DaVita, Inc., Recipients of the 2013 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award!!**



Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), a Department of Defense (DoD) office, announced on June 25th, the 15 recipients of the 2013 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. The Freedom Award is the DoD's highest recognition given to employers for exceptional support of Guard and Reserve employees. These employers distinguished themselves among the 2,899 nominations received from Guardsmen and Reservists. The 2013 recipients will be honored at the 18th annual Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award ceremony in Washington, D.C. on September 26, 2013.

***"I commend and thank the 15 recipients of the 2013 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award for providing exceptional support to our Citizen Warriors,"*** said Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel. ***"So many of our Nation's employers are finding ways to contribute to our Nation's security, but these employers stand out for their commitment to our Guardsmen and Reservists. They have the gratitude and thanks of the entire Department of Defense."***



**Colorado Springs Utilities**

was nominated by a member of the Navy Reserve. The nominator reported that Colorado Springs Utilities supports their National Guard and Reserve Service members by hosting workshops about employment opportunities and applying military skills to the civilian workforce. Of the company's 1,800 employees, 360 are veterans and 80 are members of the National Guard and Reserve. The nominator reported Colorado Springs Utilities once held a position open for 10 months to allow a deployed service member to interview for it upon his return.



**DaVita, Inc.**

was nominated by a member of the Air Force Reserve. The nominator reported that DaVita, Inc. supports their National Guard and Reserve Service members by actively recruiting more than 1,020 veterans through a company volunteer group, the Village Veterans. Published in 2012, DaVita's Operation Homefront Charter identifies additional resources and special benefits for its Guard and Reserve employees, before, during, and after deployment including four weeks of transition time. DaVita, Inc. distributes an annual military recruiting newsletter to more than 46,000 employees and partners, highlighting military and veteran employees.

**F**riday, June 7th, Colorado ESGR (COESGR) held its Annual 2013 Employer Awards banquet at the Hyatt Regency, Denver Tech Center. This is COESGR's way of thanking and honoring the employers of our brave men and women in the National Guard and Reserve. In Colorado, approximately 13,400 of our neighbors, friends, family members, and our fellow workers serve our country, truly "twice the citizen" as praised by Winston Churchill, and they could not do so without the ongoing support of their employers throughout the state.

Several notable speakers addressed the invited guests of Colorado employers, Military service members and ESGR volunteers. ESGR National Chairman, Paul E. Mock, Major General Scott B. Schofield, North American Aerospace Command, Carl Cruz, of Colorado Springs Utilities, and Command Sergeant Major Joseph Thill, Colorado Army National Guard spoke about the duty, honor and commitment of our employers and their guard and reserve employees to national security as well as support to humanitarian missions, natural disasters, and combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Banquet host and Colorado ESGR State Chairman, Dick Young, addressed the attendees about the importance of recognizing those employers who go "above and beyond" to support our guard and reserve members, with the following remarks:



CO ESGR State Chairman, Dick Young

*"Let me take a minute to explain, at least in my mind, why we need to recognize those employers who go above and beyond for our Guard and Reserve. It had its beginning on April 16, 1775, when about 1000 militia men from the colonies took up arms and marched to Bunkers Hill - at least they thought it was Bunkers Hill - where they could look down on Boston proper, fortify the hill, and prepare to drive the British soldiers out of Boston. That next morning, the bloodiest battle of the entire Revolutionary war took place: the redcoats climbing up the hill, only to be beaten back by the American rebels. On the third attack, the British were successful*

*in retaking the hill, as many of the militia had exhausted their ammunition and were now fighting in hand to hand combat, but at a cost of 1,064 British casualties, almost half of their troops quartered there in Boston.*

*That was the birth in our soon-to-be-formed country of the concept, the belief, in our citizen soldiers, the bedrock of our country's military. From that day on, to this very day, our country has relied on our citizen soldiers - today's Guard and Reserve - to support, to defend, to die if necessary, for our country.*

*Maybe it was Lieutenant Stephen Decatur leading his men secretly into Tripoli's well guarded harbor in 1804, and blowing up the American frigate "Philadelphia" that had been captured by Barbary coast pirates and held as a symbol of the weakness of America. That extremely dangerous raid was successful, and changed the Barbary coast battlefield in our favor. "from the halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli." Sound familiar?*

*In every war, in every crisis, our citizen soldiers have performed and excelled, whether it was at Bataan where New Mexico National Guard units fought so bravely against overwhelming odds, and then endured the horribleness of the death march, or the Marines of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Corps Division, fighting and struggling, day after day, hour after hour, week after week, to maintain our tenuous foothold on Guadalcanal, or our B-17 and B-24 bomber crews, mostly young men in their 20's, new to the military, suffering massive losses on their unescorted daytime raids into Germany. 90% of those who served in our military in World War II were Guardsmen and Reservists.*

*In Korea, it was the immediate call back of many who had fought in World War II, some 167,000 for example, from the Navy Reserve alone in the first six months, and now, for the past number of years, in Iraq, in Afghanistan, our citizen soldiers have been fighting, right alongside their active duty counterparts.*

*Continued on next page...*

***“Today, guard and reserves comprise about 47% of our military strength. But this does not mean or imply that we don’t need a well-trained all-voluntary military force. We do need them, very much. So history has shown, whatever the war, whatever the crisis, from the first days of our country’s existence to today, our Guard and Reserve – our citizen soldiers — each “twice a citizen “ as proclaimed by Winston Churchill, are there for us; to support, to defend, to fight, to sacrifice with their lives if they must, for our country. So it is only proper that we recognize and thank those who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan.***

***So go back with me to where we started as to why we need to recognize those employers that go above and beyond for their citizen soldier employees. Our Guard and Reserve, to function efficiently and effectively in our military, must have good jobs that they can count on. So that is why we need to honor and pay tribute to you employers who do go above and beyond for your military employees.***

***So not only is it the patriotic thing to do, not only does it help keep strong our military, but it also is the smart business thing to do.***

***For these men and women in the National Guard and Reserve, they have all been screened; they have all been tested; they understand 24/7 and to be at their post or on watch on time; many have led troops into harm’s way; they understand what leadership is, and have put it into practice; practically all have received excellent training from the world’s largest educational institution; they are goal oriented; they understand and have worked as a team.***

***In other words, they make excellent and loyal employees. That is why employers should make an extra effort to utilize their experience, their dedication, their loyalty, and their work ethic, by employing them.***

***So join the many Colorado companies, employers of all sizes, in hiring them. It’s a good, smart business move.”***





MajGen Schofield and ESGR Chairman Mock

**ESGR National Chairman Paul E. Mock and Major General Scott B. Schofield presented the following awards to exceptional employers:**

DaVita, Inc.(Denver), Colorado Springs Utilities (Colorado Springs), and JG Management Systems (Grand Junction) were awarded the Pro Patria Award. The Pro Patria Award is presented annually by each ESGR committee to the one employer in their state or territory who 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.



Pro Patria—JG Management Systems.

LeaderQuest (Centennial), Colorado Dept of Corrections (Denver), El Paso County Clerk and Recorder (Colorado Springs), US Paralympics (Colorado Springs), US Dept of the Interior Bureau of Land Management (Denver) were awarded the Seven Seals Award. The Seven Seals Award is presented at the discretion of the ESGR State Chair in recognition of significant individual or organizational achievement, initiative, or support that promotes and supports the ESGR mission.



Pro Patria—DaVita, Inc.

Lockheed Martin IS&GS Defense (Colorado Springs), Kaiser Permanente (Castle Rock), Transportation Security Administration (Aurora), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Lakewood), Arvada Police Department (Arvada), Gray Oil Company (Ft. Lupton) and Lifetime Fitness (Colorado Springs) were recognized as receiving the Above and Beyond Award. The Above and Beyond Award is given in limited numbers by state and territory ESGR committees. It recognizes employers at the state and local level who have gone above and beyond the legal requirements for granting leave and providing support for military duty by their employees.



Pro Patria—Colorado Springs Utilities



Seven Seals—LeaderQuest

## Holly Lutz, Colorado Mental Health Institute at Fort Logan, presented with a Patriot Award at the Employer Awards Banquet.

Captain Thomas Houston, Chaplain, Army National Guard, in his nomination wrote; *Mrs. Holly Lutz, has worked to ensure that I had all the paid military leave days afforded to me in addition to her incredible patience with my military schedule. Of my first 6 months as her employee I was out on duty 6-7 full work weeks not including annual training. Her flexibility when I would have less than 24 hrs notice was amazing. In addition, Holly helped to set up a manageable schedule for me after I suffered a major injury on duty and was unable to perform my civilian duties to full capacity for several months.*

*Pictured, Captain Thomas Houston (in uniform), Holly Lutz, and ESGR volunteer Rick White.*





*The first in ESGR series of awards is the Patriot Award. This is not an employer-wide award, but rather one that recognizes supervisors and bosses nominated by an employee serving in the National Guard or Reserve for support provided directly to the nominator. The Patriot Award reflects the efforts made to support Citizen Warriors through a wide-range of measures including flexible schedules, time off prior to and after deployment, caring for families and granting leaves of absence if needed.*

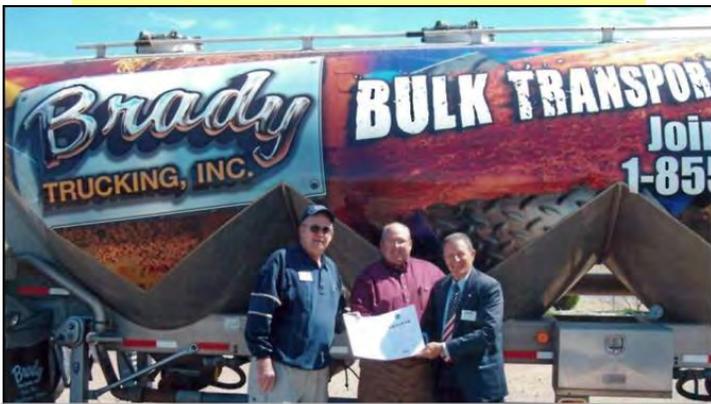


Gail Liakos (holding award), Facilities Manager at Nobel Energy, Inc., was presented with a Patriot Award from Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) by ESGR volunteers Bev Skinner left, and Dick Young, far right, after being recognizing and nominated for her outstanding support of employee Staff Sergeant Warner S. Smith III., Army National Guard in uniform. Ted D. Brown, Senior Vice President stands next to Dick Young.

In nominating Gail, Staff Sgt Smith states, ***“Gail Liakos, the facilities manager at Noble Energy, who is a veteran herself, truly understands how difficult it is to be a member of the National Guard. She supports me by offering me a work schedule that enables me to attend***

***my monthly drills which are located in Fort Collins, CO. She is prepared to handle my absence when the unit is called to duty to serve the State of Colorado or if needed, to deploy to help support the Army. She understands that because I'm a contractor with Securitas Security Inc hired to do security for Noble Energy that I'm not entitled to regular Noble Energy employee's benefits but I feel like I'm an employee because I'm treated so well by her and all the Noble Energy Employees. It's an awesome place to work and she is honored by my service to this country as a member of the National Guard.”***

### Statement of Support Presentation



Chuck Johnson center receives the award from ESGR Volunteers Mike Powers, on the left, and Lou Brackett, on the right.

The Brady Trucking Company, Inc. of Grand Junction has been recognized for their support of military service members and their families. Specifically, Brady Trucking's Vice-President Chuck Johnson received and signed a Statement of Support, for their continued support of our National Guard and Reserve personnel in Grand Valley serving our nation.



ESGR Volunteer James Garrett is presented with a certificate of appreciation from the E-9ers Association President, Mike Phelps after providing a briefing about ESGR to approximately thirty attending members.

The members of the E-9ers promote good will and camaraderie among the top-ranking non-commissioned officers of the Armed Forces of the United States and their spouses; foster social and fraternal activities; and promote the common interests of the members of the E-9ers and their spouses. Additionally, the E-9er members support the following aims and objectives: to foster patriotism and civic duty; to encourage fraternity for the common good; to assist spouses and children of deceased members; to assist injured or handicapped members; to maintain allegiance to the United States of America; to preserve and defend the United States against her enemies; and to preserve and maintain historical records and traditions of the Armed Forces.



On this page are a few event pictures taken at the Military Veterans Employment Expo held May 15-18th, including coverage by KRDO channel 13, Colorado Springs.



[Click here for video clip](#)

To date, 6/30/2013, approximately 150 Colorado National Guard Soldiers and Airmen are continuing support to Colorado civil authorities at the West Fork Complex fire and the East Peak fire.

In addition to the support listed below, two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters, outfitted with a hoist or Bambi-Bucket®, are on standby for medevac, search-and-rescue, and firefighting operations, if needed by incident commanders.



**Colorado ESGR:**

207 Volunteers

35 Volunteers assigned to Guard/Reserve Units

22 Volunteers serve as Ombudsman, mediating conflicts between employers and their employees in the military.

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**H2H.jobs** [www.H2H.jobs](http://www.H2H.jobs)

H2H offers valuable resources for Service members by way of hiring fairs, job training, career assessment and military skills translation.



Colorado's ESGR Electronic Newsletter is published not only for the information and benefit of the members of the Colorado ESGR but most importantly to our Guard and Reserve members and their employers.

The contents of this newsletter highlight activities and events conducted by Colorado ESGR.

Send comments regarding this publication to the Newsletter Editor: James Garrett at [coloradoesgr@yahoo.com](mailto:coloradoesgr@yahoo.com)