



Utah

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CALENDAR

AUGUST 11

- Employer Appreciation Day, 419th Fighter Wing

SEPTEMBER 11

- Military Advisory Council

SEPTEMBER 15

- Year-End Planning and Training Conference

NOVEMBER 8

- Hiring Our Heroes Job Fair

ON THE WEB

NEWS

- <http://bit.ly/O6dClv>

NEWSLETTERS

- <http://bit.ly/r46EvV>

FLICKR

- <http://bit.ly/eQooPP>

TWITTER

- @UT_ESGR

Message from ESGR Utah Chairman Bart Davis

ESGR Celebrates 40 Years of Support

Last month on June 22, ESGR celebrated a 40-year partnership of volunteers and employers supporting the men and women in the National Guard and Reserve as they serve in combat, disaster relief and humanitarian operations around the world. The service provided by ESGR Utah provides a significant support and educational element to those who serve in uniform and those who serve by supporting them at home.

As our mission has expanded in recent years, we have been able to meet the corresponding needs. We experience very little conflict between employers and employees once their respective responsibilities are understood.

Our new (additional) mission of finding employment opportunities for Servicemembers and Veterans is finding real success. Employers throughout Utah are realizing that most of their previous reservations about hiring military members were more myth than truth. They are finding real value in the training, experience and maturity of those who have worn the uniform of the United States. We look forward to building many more great relationships in the near future.

As we wrap up this fiscal year, I thank everyone, and especially all of our new volunteers and employers who have joined this most worthwhile endeavor. Their support has allowed our fellow Utahans who serve in the military to know that they are not forgotten and are appreciated.

I wish you all a happy and safe summer and look forward to a productive and helpful fall.

Regards,



Freedom Award Comes to Utah

L-3 Communications

The ESGR National Committee announced recently that L-3 Communications Systems West of Salt Lake City has been selected to receive the 2012 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. A Utah Air National Guard-member nominated L-3 for the honor.

The Freedom Award is the Department of Defense’s highest recognition given to employers for exceptional support of Guard and Reserve employees. This year’s 15 recipients distinguished themselves among the 3,236 nominations submitted earlier this year by Guardmembers, Reservists, or family members acting on their behalf.

The nominator reported that L-3 Communications established a Military Relations Committee to lead the company on policies related to military employees and support related initiatives including the Utah National Guard Charitable Trust and the Sub-for-Santa program. The nominator also noted she was hired for a position despite lacking the required engineering degree because the recruiter recognized that her military experience provided her the necessary qualifications to be successful in the job.

ESGR is a Department of Defense agency established in 1972. Its mission is to gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law and resolving conflicts through mediation.

ESGR Utah In the News

Two Firms Honored for Support of Guard, Reserve Employees

SALT LAKE CITY — Two Utah employers have been selected as semifinalists for the 2012 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award for exceptional commitment to their Guard and Reserve employees.

This year, 133 semifinalists nationwide stood out among a pool of 3,236 nominees. Utah's honorees are L-3 Communications Systems West, Salt Lake City, which specializes in communications systems for high-performance intelligence collection, and MonaVie LLC, South Jordan, a multilevel distributor of nutritional products.

Freedom Award nominations come directly from Guard and Reserve members or family members acting on their behalf. The process provides service members an opportunity to recognize employers for going above and beyond what is required by law.

These "employers have distinguished themselves for their support of their National Guard and Reserve employees, and are truly serving our nation with their extraordinary commitment," said James Rebholz, national chairman of ESGR.

"Their efforts are to be applauded, and ESGR salutes these patriotic employers for their special care of their Guard and Reserve employees and their families while they serve our nation in times of war and peace."

— *The Salt Lake Tribune*, April 25, 2012

West Jordan Businesses Recognized

WEST JORDAN — ESGR announced that 33 Utah Guard and Reserve members nominated their employers for the 2012 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. Two of those businesses, Old Navy and the Dannon Company, are located in West Jordan.

Guard and Reserve members nominated their civilian employers for the Freedom Award during the 12-week nomination season. Guard and Reserve members, who stand ready to serve whenever our

Nation needs them, often put their civilian lives on hold when they answer the call to duty. Supportive employers provide a tremendous amount of stability and peace of mind to these Citizen Warriors and their families, enabling them to continue their dedicated service to our country.

"Guardsmen and Reservists continue to receive outstanding support from their employers," said ESGR National Chair James G. Rebholz. "America's employers have not wavered in their commitment to these Citizen Warriors."

Almost one-half of the U S military is comprised of the Guard and Reserve, and while most employers proudly support their military employees, Freedom Award recipients go above and beyond what is required by law.

— *West Jordan Journal*, April 19, 2012

Smith's Grocery Store Director Receives Patriot Award

SALT LAKE CITY — Smith's Food & Drug Store director Scott Ririe was selected to receive a Patriot Award from ESGR.

The Patriot Award was created to recognize employers who support employees who are members of the National Guard and Reserve. Smith's associate Brandon Sterling, nominated Ririe, his supervisor, last year. During that time, Sterling was mobilized to serve as a staff sergeant with the 478th Human Resources Company of the Army Reserve from July through December 2011.

"Before I left he made sure all my needs were taken care of while not having to worry about my employment," said Sterling. "Scott has shown tremendous support to my family, myself and our country."

Said Smith's President Mark Tuffin: "We are very proud of Scott for receiving this award. He has demonstrated the kind of support we desire all of our managers to provide for our Servicemen and women who are taking time from their families and careers to serve our country."

From its division office in Salt Lake City, Smith's 15,600 associates serve customers in 133 stores throughout seven western states, including 47 stores in Utah.

— *The Salt Lake Tribune*, May 30, 2012

Tooele Army Depot Supervisor Gets Honored with Patriot Award

TOOELE — A supervisor from the Directorate of Ammunition Equipment and Manufacturing, Tooele Army Depot (TEAD), Tooele, confirmed the organization's support for the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve on June 20 by receiving an ESGR award. The ceremony took place at the TEAD's Pilot Model Shop where James McMMain (below, center), honored supervisor, was presented with the Patriot Award. Terry Christensen, Utah's ESGR Region Representative, presented McMMain this award in conjunction with the depot commander, Colonel Christopher Mohan, below right.

"I appreciate the opportunity to come out to Tooele and recognize the organization for all the support given to both the National Guard and Reserves," stated Christensen during the ceremony. "TEAD has been in the Tooele Valley for a long time and the employees here continue to be dedicated to the soldiers."

Christensen expressed his appreciation to all the TEAD employees for their hard work. McMMain was strongly recommended by Kyle Cox, below left, machinery repairman, who is also a chief petty officer in the Naval Reserve.



"Jim has been very understanding about my duties as a reservist. Last year, while I was working the weekend shift, he was flexible in letting me adjust my work schedule to accommodate my Reserve weekends. He has been supportive of me attending my scheduled training and has adjusted my workload to accommodate the time I had to be away from work," said Cox. "Jim has recognized the skills and training that I received from the Reserves and this has allowed me to become a better employee for the depot."

More ESGR Utah In the News

The Patriot Award is the first of the sequential and progressive employer awards in the program. It is intended specifically for the recognition of individual supervisors or the employing organization as a whole. Awardees receive a framed Patriot Award, and then are eligible for further recognition at the state and national levels.

— *Tooele Transcript-Bulletin*, June 28, 2012

Utah Highway Patrol Supervisor Receives Patriot Award



BRIGHAM CITY — Sergeant Rick Mayo, second from right, of the Utah Highway Patrol received the Patriot Award from the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve's Utah committee April 11 at the Brigham City UHP Office.

This award is given to those employers and supervisors who show active support for their employees who serve in the National Guard or Armed Forces Reserve programs.

Colonel Daniel Fuhr and Lieutenant Lee Perry of the Utah Highway Patrol were on hand to witness the presentation made by retired Colonel Morty Jenkins, center, who represented ESGR Utah's Region 1 at the ceremony.

Click [here](#) to read more
ESGR Utah news stories.



BOSS LIFT FORT BLISS, TEXAS

Civilian employers of recently deployed Soldiers of the Utah National Guard's Afghanistan-bound 624th Engineer Company participated in an ESGR-sponsored Boss Lift June 21-23.

"Boss Lifts are designed to increase awareness of an employee's military duties and responsibilities and to exhibit the strenuous training and personal sacrifices that Service-members and families make," said Kim Watts, ESGR Utah chief of staff.

Employers See Soldiers in Action A Trip of a Lifetime

Twenty-seven employers boarded a Utah Air National Guard KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft for the June 21 flight to Fort Bliss. While airborne, passengers had a front-row seat for an air-to-air refueling operation, where F-16 fighter jets from Hill Air Force Base, Utah, were refueled.

Most passengers had never seen a refueling aircraft in action, and they were very impressed with the precision of pilots and boom operators as hundreds of gallons of JP-8 jet fuel were passed to receiving aircraft at 25,000 feet at a speed of 200 knots.

Once the aircraft arrived at Fort Bliss, waiting on the tarmac for them were Maj. Gen. Brian Tarbet, adjutant general of the

Utah National Guard; Command Sgt. Maj. Bruce Summers, state sergeant major; Capt. Chris Vernon, commander of the 624th; and 1st Sgt. David Hegg, company first sergeant.

Vernon spoke to employers, welcoming them to Fort Bliss and acknowledged their sacrifice in giving up their employees for a year.

"We made sure that when we put together our unit roster for this deployment that we only brought the best of the best with us," he explained. "But that also meant that we took the best of the best from you employers. You have my personal thanks for your support."

Employers met several of the leaders of the 624th at a dinner held that evening at the Fort Bliss Centennial Club. Guests heard

from Maj. Gen. Tarbet, who explained to them what it means when a civilian employer supports their employees who serve in the Guard or Reserve.

"These are superior young people. I know you support and love them, and the outpouring has been genuine," said Tarbet. "Our Soldiers are very well trained, and they come to you with a good work ethic, they're drug free, show up on time and they give you a day's work for a day's pay. We know that in this tough economy, [calling up your employees for deployment] affects your bottom line."

The next morning, June 22, employers rode a bus to MacGregor Range, N.M., about 25 miles north of Fort Bliss, where Soldiers of the 624th live and train. Eating breakfast at the

dining facility and touring her Soldier's barracks helped Rachel Trostrud, supervisor of SPC Kendall Larsen at Jordan Valley Hospital, to understand and appreciate what Larsen is going through.

"It was wonderful to see him in an environment different than the one I see him in at work," she said. "It made me appreciate him as a person and as an employee even more, seeing this whole broad part of his life that I didn't know much about. He and his bunkmates seem like brothers."

Another employer, Rich Vernon, stepping in to run his son's business for the next year, was impressed with what he saw in his son Chris, commander of the 624th.

"It was a very proud moment to see him in action, serving his country and doing a good job," said Vernon.

Employers later shared an MRE (Meal Ready to Eat) with their Soldiers and joined them for Physical Training and a litter-

carrying relay to test Soldiers' skills in safely transporting wounded.

One of the day's highlights was the MRAP (Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected) vehicle rollover training. Employers donned helmets and other protective gear that Soldiers wear and took seats in the rollover simulator. Trainers rotated the vehicle to different positions, allowing employers to practice proper restraint and egress procedures during a rollover accident in the MRAP, which is somewhat larger, taller and more heavily protected than a Humvee.

In the 100-degree heat of the New Mexico desert, employers observed Soldiers conduct their qualification on the M2 .50-caliber machine gun and the Mk-19 grenade launcher.

Each employer, assisted by their Soldier, jumped at the chance to fire some familiarization rounds on the M2. Even 88-year-old Byron Lemmon, a World War II veteran and member of the

ESGR Utah committee, joined in the fun.

"It was awesome!" said Lemmon. "It brought back a lot of old memories."

Returning from the field, employers and Soldiers shared a final meal and attended a short program together. The emotion in the room was palpable as bosses and employees spent a few final moments together before Soldiers returned to their training.

Sergeant Daniel Ott reflected on the visit of his boss, Bill Jespersen, of Western Cargo Services.

"It meant a lot and it showed how much he really cares," said Ott, a communication and network specialist with the 624th, who started working as a truck driver for Jespersen three years ago. "He's taken good care of me. If I need something, he's always there. He's a good man."

Jespersen couldn't bring himself to say goodbye when he and Ott parted in Utah, making it that much tougher for him now.

MRE LUNCH DAY 2 AT FORT BLISS, TEXAS

Sergeant Daniel Ott, left, shares a Meal Ready to Eat (MRE) with his boss, Bill Jespersen, June 22.

"[His visit] meant a lot and it showed how much he really cares," said Ott. "He's taken good care of me. If I need something, he's always there. He's a good man."





“It’s just hard to say ‘See you later’ and know he may not be coming home,” said Jespersen with a catch in his voice. “I’m just too tender-hearted, I guess. It’s emotional—and I don’t get emotional.”

“He’s a good kid,” he added after composing himself and clarifying that he is not the boss, but just the guy who signs the checks. “Daniel’s being gone means I gotta work about twice as hard, but it’s worth it. You gotta support him. Somebody has to; they don’t have the draft anymore.”

Specialist Kendall Larsen, a plumber and self-styled “undercover medic” with the 624th, is a nurse supervised by Trostrud at Jordan Valley Hospital. He was also glad his boss came on the trip.

“It was great to see a familiar face and have someone who can go back and tell my coworkers what I’ll be doing while I’m gone,” he said. “It was an amazing experience to spend the day with her and share these moments.”

Trostrud admitted that because of the Boss Lift she sees Larsen in a much different light.

“I see him as a dear person that I care much more about,” she said. “I have an appreciation for employees who have been in the military because you know that they have had to work under structure and standards. I wish all of his coworkers could do this. It is important for us to go back with passion and let our acquaintances know how vital it is to support these guys.”

Unit commander Capt. Chris Vernon was thankful to see his business partner/father and was equally appreciative of what he will do to keep things going in his absence.

“He’s made a sacrifice, coming out of retirement to run our business,” said Chris. “Being self-employed and leaving can really cause you stress. When Soldiers know—like I do—that they have their employer’s support and that their job will be there when they get back, it puts their mind at ease and they can give 100 percent while they’re deployed.”

The next morning, employers gathered for breakfast. They thanked ESGR Utah representatives and Guard leaders for giving them this opportunity. The group then returned to Biggs

Army Airfield to board the KC-135 aircraft for the trip back to Utah.

As the plane sat on the tarmac, Rich Vernon summed up what he had seen and felt the last three days.

“I spent 13 years in the Army,” he said. “The vast majority of people in Utah have no idea what the military is like; they’ve never lived it. Coming on this [Boss Lift] is a fantastic experience for any employer. Every employer ought to have the opportunity to get just a taste—for one day—of what it really looks like, feels like, tastes like and smells like to be a U.S. Army Soldier.”

ESGR Utah’s Kim Watts agreed that this Boss Lift was a success.

“It exceeded our expectations and we see a change in employers at the end of every Boss Lift—they get it,” said Watts. “They understand the importance of supporting and being willing to do whatever they can to help Servicemembers and families during deployment and afterward.”

[More Boss Lift photos](#)

Out & About



CON-WAY FREIGHT SALT LAKE CITY

Jeff Groat, center, Service Center manager at Conway Freight Trucking in Salt Lake City, received the Patriot Award May 29.

Sergeant Curtis Flukuger, left, of the Utah Army Guard's Alpha Company, 489th Brigade Support Battalion, nominated Groat for the award for supporting Flukuger's military commitments. The award was presented by ESGR Utah's Jeff Tiede, right.

CORNER BAKERY CAFÉ DRAPER

ESGR Utah's Bill Rappleye, left, presented the ESGR Statement of Support to Cindy Orme, general manager of the Corner Café in Draper April 9.

When an employer signs a Statement of Support, they fully recognize, honor, and enforce the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). They also agree to support Servicemembers and families in peace, in crises, and in war.





More Out & About

LINCOLN TITLE

OGDEN

J. Michael Moyes, second from left, general manager of Lincoln Title, receives the Patriot Award June 5 from ESGR Utah's Kay Hargis, second from right.

Moyes' employee, Michaela Johnson, left, wife of ILT Jeremy Johnson, right, of the Utah Army National Guard's 624th Engineer Company, nominated Moyes for the award.



FIRESTONE TIRE

DRAPER

Michael and Melissa Bird, owners of Firestone Tire in Draper, signed a Statement of Support April 4 at the Draper Chamber of Commerce.

Attending the ceremony, from left to right, were Draper Mayor Darrell Smith, Draper Chamber President and ESGR Utah's Bill Rappleye, Michael Bird, Melissa Bird, Utah State Senator Howard Stephenson, and Utah State Representative Greg Hughes.



More Out & About



A&B GLASS

CLEARFIELD

SGT Aaron Malone, center, of the Utah Army National Guard's 1-211th Aviation, nominated his supervisor at A&B Glass, Brian Allred, right, for the Patriot Award.

ESGR Utah's Kay Hargis, left, presented the award to Allred April 7. Allred also signed a Statement of Support at the ceremony.

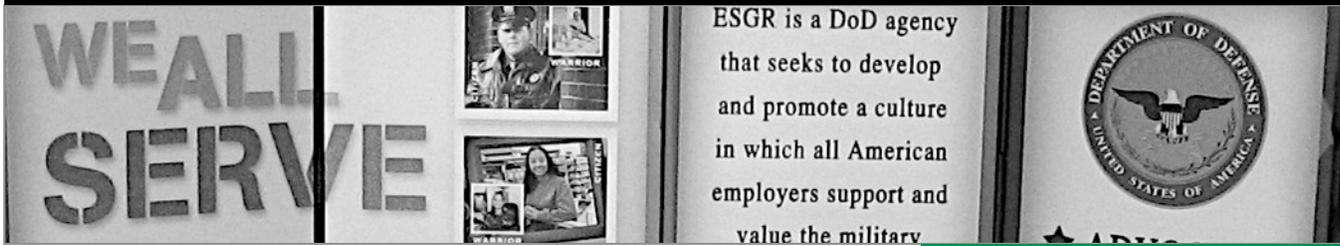
LINCOLN TITLE

OGDEN

ESGR Utah's Kay Hargis, left, presented a Statement of Support June 5 to Nate Baldwin, center, director of marketing for Lincoln Title in Ogden.

Also pictured is 1LT Jeremy Johnson, right, of the Utah Army National Guard's 624th Engineer Company. Johnson's wife Michaela is employed at Lincoln Title.





Tips & Info

How Employers Can Help Servicemembers

If employers desire clarification of their responsibilities or the responsibility of the Servicemembers they employ, they can contact the National ESGR Customer Service Center toll free at (800) 336-4590 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. (Eastern) or online at [USERRA Assistance Request](http://USERRA.Assistance.Request).

There are many ways for civilian employers to get more involved:

- **Boss Lifts** – Employers are transported, via military aircraft, to military facilities where they observe National Guard and Reserve members on duty.
- **Briefing with the Boss** – Brings together employers, unit commanders, ESGR volunteers and community leaders to discuss issues related to service in the National Guard and Reserve.
- **Statement of Support Signing Ceremonies** – By signing a Statement of Support for the Guard and Reserve, an employer demonstrates an understanding of the importance of military service. It also sends a clear message to employees who serve in the military that they don't have to worry about their civilian jobs.

Servicemembers Can Recognize Employers

Many employers choose to go above and beyond in support of their military employees. Think that your employer values your military service? Let them know how much you appreciate it with one of our ESGR employer recognition awards.

- [Nominate them for a Patriot Award](#)
- Have they already received a **Patriot Award**? Contact your local committee for assistance in nominating them for an **Above and Beyond** award, or a **Pro Patria** award.

Other Resources

We can assist you with any questions you might have regarding USERRA and your rights and responsibilities. Please call (800) 336-4590 from 8-6 (Eastern).

- Most employment conflicts can be avoided by being candid with your employer about your obligations as a member of one of the Reserve components. [Click here for useful tips](#) on approaching the subject with your civilian employer.
- It is required that all Reservists (excluding AGRs) [update the Civilian Employer Information \(CEI\) database](#).

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