



Utah



Winter 2009

Message from the State Chairman

To Utah Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Service Families, and Employers:



Bart Davis

As we begin this holiday season with its travels, celebrations, or just settling in and enjoying the warmth of our homes, I want to extend my very best wishes to you for the selfless sacrifices you have made in the defense of our country and way of life during this past year.

This year we have seen hundreds of our family members, neighbors, and employees off to unknown dangers. We have also welcomed hundreds home with celebrations and an offer of thanks for their safe return. We all in our own small way contribute to the liberty we enjoy.

Our country is great because of our great Servicemen and women and citizens like you who are willing to do your part to keep it great. Thank you for all you have done and will do.

Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and Happy New Year to you all. And, thank you for all you do!

Bart Davis
Utah ESGR State Chairman

Nominate Your Employer for the 2009 Employer Support Freedom Award

ESGR has opened nominations for the 2009 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. National Guard and Reserve members and their families may nominate employers who have gone above and beyond in their support of military employees.

Nominate at www.FreedomAward.mil from **November 3, 2008 to January 19, 2009.**

The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their outstanding support of their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

The 2009 recipients will be announced in the spring and honored in Washington, D.C. at the 14th annual Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award ceremony September 17, 2009.

New ESGR Committee Members

- Neal George, ABF Freight Systems
- Paul Swenson, Colonial Flag
- Sergeant First Class (Retired) Jackie Peterson
- Sergeant Major (Retired) Todd Bennett
- Command Sergeant Major (Retired) Sid Cardon
- MAJ Annette Barnes, UTNG Family Program
- LTC Hank McIntire, UTNG Public Affairs

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.

Salina's Robinson Transport Receives 2008 Employer Support Freedom Award — *By Sara Moore*

WASHINGTON — Kim Robinson knows that when military members deploy, they face a lot of stress overseas on top of worrying about their families at home. To help alleviate that stress,

Robinson has committed to do what he can to ease the burden on the families of his employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

Robinson's company, Robinson Transport, of Salina, Utah, provides \$1,000 a month to the families of its employees who are deployed with the National Guard or Reserve. This money is meant to supplement the family's income, and the company still pays all company bonuses, as well as full life, health and dental insurance for the deployed employee.

For its efforts to support employees who serve in the reserve forces, Robinson Transport was one of 15 employers nationwide to receive the 2008 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award Sept. 18 in Washington, DC. The award is the highest honor a company can receive for its support of military employees.

Robinson Transport has seven employees in the National Guard or Reserve, all of whom have been deployed within the last five years, Robinson said, adding that he's happy to do what he can to support his employees while they're serving the country.

"They're over there fighting for my freedoms, which I enjoy very much, and they're leaving their families and their wives, and most of them have smaller children," he said. "They're over there worrying about their life for one thing, but on the other hand, they're worrying about what their [families] are going through. If I can help them that way, then that's a little less worry that they have."



Photo courtesy of the American Forces Press Service
President George W. Bush, center, meets in the Oval Office with the 2008 recipients of the Employer Support Freedom Award.



Army Sgt. 1st Class Roger Orton, who has served for 33 years in the Utah National Guard, nominated Robinson Transport for the Freedom Award because he saw their dedication to military personnel firsthand.



Photo courtesy of Robinson Transport
Of his 130 employees, Robinson has seven in the Guard or Reserve.

Orton has been a truck driver with Robinson for 26 years, and in 2006 he was deployed to Afghanistan. While he was gone, someone from the company called his wife at least twice a week to check on her. They also paid her the \$1,000 a month, even though Orton told his boss that he actually made more money while deployed than he'd been earning at Robinson Transport.

"I asked them why they thought they needed to do that, and they said it was to ease the pain of us being gone and that it was a small price to pay for what we were doing," Orton said. "It's too bad all employers aren't this good to work for, and it's easy to see how easy it is to work for them for 26 years."

Orton said that several other members of his unit also work for Robinson, and the company always has accommodated them when it came to taking time off for drill weekends and summer training. He said when he came back from Afghanistan, he talked to the ESGR representative from Utah, who told him that he had received many letters telling him how supportive Robinson Transport is of its military employees.

Orton said he enjoys working for Robinson because the management is caring and supportive. "You go to work every morning knowing that you work for good people," he said. "There's no other employer that tops them. They deserve the red-carpet treatment from the Army for what they do."

Out and About

The key to ESGR Utah's success is our team's ability to be actively involved in the community, educating Service members and employers, identifying and resolving conflicts, and recognizing outstanding support. Here are a few examples of those efforts in 2008:



Civilian employers of members of the 142nd Military Intelligence Battalion, Utah National Guard, were treated in April to a Boss Lift to Fort Lewis, Wash., where they learned firsthand of the training and preparation their employees receive before heading over to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Employers flew on a KC-135R Stratotanker, spent time with the pilots in the cockpit, and had an up-close view of a Utah Air National Guard refueling operation during the flight.



"I now have a better understanding of the importance of supporting our fellow military associates while they are on active duty defending our freedoms," said Patrick Sorensen, of Stock Building Supply, one of 39 employers to make the trip to Fort Lewis.



On Nov. 11, at a special Veterans Day ceremony at the University of Utah, ESGR Utah officials presented two employers, Goldman Sachs and Associated Foods with the Department of Defense's "Above and Beyond Award" for their support of their employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.

Associated Foods pays their employees the difference between their military salary and their civilian pay during deployment, and Goldman Sachs gives workers who wear the uniform their full salary and benefits while they serve on active duty overseas in support of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom.



Orem Applebee's manager Casey Vanderhoef, left, presents to MG Brian Tarbet, adjutant general of the Utah National Guard, a check for \$600 on Dec. 10 to benefit the Utah National Guard Charitable Trust, a fund designed to help Service members and their families with emergency food, housing, medical, or other emergencies.

Vanderhoef became aware of the Trust when he met with MAJ Annette Barnes, an ESGR Utah committee member, to sign a Statement of Support for his two employees who serve in the Utah National Guard.

"We are a neighborhood grill, and we wanted to take care of our own," said Vanderhoef.

Patriot Award

The ESGR Patriot Award is the first of the sequential and progressive employer awards programs. It is intended specifically for the recognition of individual supervisors who appreciate the sacrifice of our Citizen-Warriors and support their service in the Guard and Reserve. Patriot Award nominations may come only from Reserve Component members or their spouses. Nominated employers receive a Patriot Award certificate and accompanying "Patriot" lapel pin.

Utah Guard members and Reservists have submitted more than 121 Patriot Award nominations during 2008. We encourage Service members to nominate their supportive employers by going to www.esgr.net and click on **Award Your Employer**.

Statement of Support

Invite your employer to initiate the Statement of Support process themselves by going to the ESGR Web site, www.esgr.net, clicking on the **Show Your Support** link in the right-hand column of the home page, and following the on-screen instructions.



Key ESGR Utah Staff

- Bart Davis, State Chairman, (801) 432-4937
- Kim Watts, Executive Director, (801) 432-4492
- Bill Rappleye, Employer Outreach, (801) 550-9578
- Dennis Johnson, Military Outreach, (801) 432-4300

Calendar of Events

- January 30-31 - Region 4 Team Training
- March 5 - Employer Advisory Council Meeting
- March 10 - Military Advisory Council Meeting
- March 18 - Executive Committee Meeting
- March 27-28 - Annual Awards/Planning Conference

Employer Outreach

Tips for employers of Guard members and Reservists:

- Learn more about the role of the National Guard and Reserve. Ask your employees what they do and how they fit into the "big picture" of national defense.



- Get to know your employees' military commanders and supervisors. Ask them to provide you with advance notice of your employees' annual military duty and work out scheduling conflicts early.
- Examine your personnel policies to see how they accommodate and support participation in the National Guard and Reserve.

Military Outreach

This program serves as the primary link between the Service member and the Utah ESGR Committee and provides training and materials on the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act so that all service members understand their responsibilities and rights guaranteed by this law.

This program also provides training and assists the assigned military commands and units in the development and execution of employer relations programs. These include Boss Lifts, Employer Days, and Briefings with the Boss.

Contact Us

We welcome your feedback on the ESGR Utah newsletter. Please call LTC Hank McIntire at (801) 432-4407, or send him an E-mail at hank.mcintire@us.army.mil.

