



Utah



Message from the State Chairman

We are off and running in a new and what is shaping up to be a very demanding year. As of this writing, we have already conducted 27 briefings for more than 3,150 Servicemembers and have contacted 166 employers.



Bart Davis

We are currently planning at least three and possibly four Boss Lifts this year to visit deploying Soldiers at their mobilization sites.

I am fortunate to be associated with ESGR and its many volunteers who help

Servicemen/women and employers throughout our state.

I am confident that we will be able—with your help—to continue to provide the services deserved by the men, women, and employers of Utah. Best wishes in your continued efforts to improve the lives of those who serve.

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.

Patriot Awards

Utah Guard members and Reservists submitted more than **125** Patriot Award nominations since the publication of our Fall 2009 newsletter! We encourage Servicemembers to nominate their supportive employers by going to www.esgr.org and clicking on **Patriot Award** at the bottom of the main page.

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) 652-8897

Event Calendar

- February 11 - APAC Conference Planning Meeting
- March 10 - Executive Committee Meeting
- March 26-27 - Annual Planning/Awards Conference

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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.

Out and About

SALT LAKE CITY — The National Committee for Employer Support of The Guard and Reserve (ESGR) awarded Sonic Innovations CEO Sam Westover its Patriot Award award Oct. 22 at a ceremony held at its company headquarters.

Westover was recognized for supporting Ethan Skarstedt, a graphic designer for Sonic Innovations. Skarstedt, deployed twice to the Middle East while working at Sonic, was kept on the payroll and received benefits throughout his deployment.



*Photo courtesy of Sonic Innovations
Lou Schoen, left, of ESGR Utah presents the Patriot Award to Sonic Innovations CEO Sam Westover.*

Westover raised awareness of Skarstedt's service and supported the Skarstedt family through these efforts. Sonic Innovations was recognized at an awards dinner held at the Utah State Capitol. Westover received the award including an honorary certificate and Patriot pin from Lou Schoen, committee member of ESGR Utah.

"Having a stepfather who was a Vietnam War Veteran, I understand what it's like to be deployed and what effect military service can have on a family," said Westover. "I believe it's important for the business sector to do everything it can to try to acknowledge the sacrifices these individuals are making to serve our country."

ESGR offers employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law, and resolving conflict through mediation. The Patriotic Employer award is given to supportive managers, supervisors, or a company in general to show appreciation of their military-member employee support. This award

can only be given if nominated by an employee involved in the military.

"When I first heard about this award," recalled Skarstedt, "I knew I wanted to nominate Sam. My family and I are so grateful for Sonic's support and involvement in our military journey. My employment was one less thing I had to worry about in an already emotional rollercoaster."

— *From audiologyonline.com*

PROVO — Garr Judd, executive director of the Mountain Valley chapter of the American Red Cross, had no idea that he would be attending his own awards ceremony where he received the Patriot Award Dec. 1 from the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

Judd was honored as a patriotic employer who contributes to national security and protecting liberty and freedom by supporting employee participation in the National Guard and Reserve, according to a news release from the Red Cross.

Army Capt. Nathan Hancock and Dave Gunn from ESGR Utah Guard and Reserve presented the award to Judd at Red Cross headquarters in Provo.

— *From the Provo Daily Herald, Dec. 1, 2009*

ST. GEORGE — Pine View Middle School principal Mike Stephenson received the Patriot Award Feb. 1 from ESGR Utah representative Dallin Nielsen. Stephenson was for his support of his employees' participation in the National Guard and Reserve.

— *From The Spectrum, Dec. 1, 2009*

SALT LAKE CITY — Phil Faulkner, Union Pacific director of Intermodal West, received the Patriot Award Dec. 6 from employee Petty Officer Michael J. Smith, Naval Cargo Handlers Battalion, U.S. Navy Reserve, and Martin Walsh, Region 2 chair for ESGR Utah, for Faulkner's tremendous support of Smith's military commitments.

"Phil is always supportive of my obligation to the Naval Reserve," said Smith.

Become an ESGR Volunteer!

Our dedicated volunteers come from all walks of life. We are business executives, civic leaders, and patriotic citizens. Some of our volunteer activities include the following:

- **Employer Outreach:** Develop relationships with employers to promote advocacy for service in the National Guard and Reserve.
- **Ombudsman:** Assist in preventing, reducing or resolving employer or service member misunderstandings regarding employment rights and responsibilities.
- **Public Affairs:** ESGR Public Affairs volunteers work with military and civilian media organizations to promote public understanding of the ESGR mission.
- **Military Unit Representative:** Inform and educate members of the National Guard and Reserve regarding their employment rights and responsibilities under USERRA.

Members of the National Guard and Reserve and their civilian employers form an alliance that is essential to our nation's national security. These brave men and women perform critical roles in disaster relief efforts at home and continue to serve around the world to ensure our freedom. They could not perform their critical mission without support from people like you.

Your involvement, with as little as a few hours a month, can improve the employer relations of the brave men and women who place themselves in harm's way, leave their families, and put their careers on hold as they preserve our way of life.

As an ESGR volunteer you become a contributing citizen to our national security. Besides helping your community, volunteer hours also count towards the President's Volunteer Service Award.



USERRA

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) is the Federal law that establishes rights and responsibilities for members of the National Guard and Reserv, and their civilian employers. USERRA affects employment, reemployment, and retention in employment when employees serve or have served in the Uniformed Services.

Congress provided the statutory authority for investigating alleged violations of USERRA to the U.S. Department of Labor (DoL). If DoL finds that an employer has likely violated USERRA, DoL may refer the case to the U.S. Department of Justice for legal action against the employer.

ESGR and USERRA

ESGR informs and educates Servicemembers and their civilian employers regarding their rights and responsibilities governed by USERRA. ESGR does not enforce USERRA; rather, it serves as a neutral, free resource for employers and Servicemembers. ESGR's trained ombudsmen provide mediation for issues relating to compliance with USERRA.

The law applies to all public and private employers in the United States to include federal, state, and local governments, regardless of size. Providing that the Servicemember meets all criteria, employers must provide the following:

- Prompt job reinstatement
- Accumulation of seniority, including pension-plan benefits
- Reinstatement of health insurance
- Training/retraining of job skills, including accommodations for the disabled

ESGR.org

For information about all things ESGR, check out the National ESGR Web site at www.esgr.org. There you can learn about the ESGR mission, organization, military and employer outreach, volunteering, awards, annual reports, and the latest ESGR news from around the country.