



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 11, 2012

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**DoD Encourages Guardsmen and Reservists to Nominate Employers for  
2013 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award**  
*23 Coast Guard Reserve members submit nominations at halfway mark*

ARLINGTON, Va. – Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), a Department of Defense agency, is encouraging all Guard and Reserve members to nominate their supportive employers for the 2013 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. The Freedom Award is the DoD's highest honor for civilian employers supporting Guard and Reserve members. The award highlights those employers going to extraordinary lengths to encourage their military employees' service and provides Guard and Reserve members a way to show their appreciation for their employers' tremendous support.

More than 1,450 Guardsmen and Reservists have submitted nominations since November 1; 23 of those nominations came from members of the Coast Guard Reserve. The nomination process does not take long to complete and family members may also submit nominations on a service member's behalf. Employers of every size and industry are eligible. ESGR will accept nominations at [www.FreedomAward.mil](http://www.FreedomAward.mil) through January 21, 2013.

"Guard and Reserve members understand better than anyone how critical America's employers are to our national security, which is why we look to them to tell us which employers deserve this distinguished honor," said Ron Young, Executive Director, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. "We call on all Guardsmen and Reservists who have received outstanding support from their employer to nominate them for the 2013 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. There really is no better way to thank these employers for standing firmly behind our military men and women."

The 2013 recipients will be announced in early summer and honored in Washington, DC during a ceremony next fall. Recipients of the 2012 Freedom Award included diverse employers such as a telecommunications company, department of public safety, Midwest law firm, and small town church.

**About ESGR and the Freedom Award:**

The Freedom Award was instituted in 1996 under the auspices of ESGR to recognize exceptional support from the employer community. In the years since, 175 employers have been honored with the award. Established as a DoD agency 40 years ago, ESGR develops and maintains employer support for Guard and Reserve service. ESGR advocates relevant initiatives, recognizes outstanding support, increases awareness of applicable laws, and resolves conflict between service members and employers. Paramount to ESGR's mission is encouraging employment of Guardsmen and Reservists who bring integrity, global perspective and proven leadership to the civilian workforce.

For questions or interviews regarding the Freedom Award, please contact Beth Sherman, ESGR Public Affairs, at 571-372-0705 or by email at [ESGR-PA@osd.mil](mailto:ESGR-PA@osd.mil).

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