

ESGR in the News

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Kennebec County Sheriff Office honored by Department of Defense For Extraordinary Support

BANGOR, Maine – Maine Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), a Department of Defense (DoD) office, announced today Sheriff Randy Liberty and Kennebec County Sheriff Office was honored with the Pro Patria Award in recognition of extraordinary support of its employees who serve in the Maine National Guard and Reserve.

“The ESGR’s Pro Patria Award is presented annually by each ESGR State Committee to one small, one large and one public sector employer in their state or territory. Recipients have demonstrated the greatest support to Guard and Reserve employees through their leadership and practices, including adopting personnel policies that make it easier for employees to participate in the National Guard and Reserves. This is the highest level award that may be bestowed by a state ESGR committee said John Cashwell Maine ESGR state chair. “Supportive employers are critical to maintaining the strength and readiness of the nation’s Guard and Reserve units.”

Sheriff Liberty and his team which includes several active reserve component members at Kennebec County Sheriff Office joins thousands of American employers who have reviewed and amended their current human resources policies to ensure compliance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Many employers provide support far beyond what USERRA requires to include pay differential to offset the loss of wages, and extension of health care benefits which complement coverage provided by the military when their employees are mobilized.

Sheriff Liberty, an Army retired Command Sergeant Major said “We have a moral duty to help these [service members] reintegrate because it changes you forever when you pull the trigger and you lose guys. It’s our duty as a society to continue to invest in these individuals...” We like to hire reservist and veterans because we understand the challenges they faced and the skills, abilities and qualities they offer to the department.

ESGR seeks to foster a culture in which all employers support and value the employment and military service of members of the National Guard and Reserve in the United States. ESGR facilitates and promotes a cooperative culture of employer support for National Guard and Reserve service by developing and advocating mutually beneficial initiatives, recognizing outstanding employer support, increasing awareness of applicable laws and policies, resolving potential conflicts between employers and their service members, and acting as the employers’ principal advocate within DoD. 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 more information about ESGR outreach programs or volunteer opportunities, call 1-800-336-4590 or visit [www.ESGR.mil](http://www.ESGR.mil).