

Report for CALMOAA Annual Meeting - November 20 – 21, 2020

Date: 21 November 2020

Name: COL (Ret) Joe Boscacci

Position: CALMOAA ESGR Coordinator & Vice Chairman, Volunteer Management (California ESGR Committee).

Description of Role: Advise CALMOAA of the Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve (ESGR) established in 1972 to promote cooperation and understanding between Reserve Component Service Members and their civilian employers and to assist in the resolution of conflicts arising from an employees military commitment. ESGR is supported by a network of more than 3,600 volunteers in 54 committees located across 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam-CNMI (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), Puerto Rico and the U.S Virgin Islands.

The Major Roles of ESGR, a Department of Defense program are Employer Outreach, Military Outreach and Ombudsman support. In addition, ESGR recognizes employer support through its Awards Program to include, My Boss is a Patriot award, Spouse Patriot, Seven Seals, Above & Beyond, Pro Patria, Extraordinary Employer Support, and the highest and most prestigious, the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom award.

ESGR California with 242 Volunteers has 3 categories: Advocates, Ambassadors and Ombudsmen (Please note that some Volunteers can serve in more than one role). Because of our large land Area of Operations, ESGR California is divided into 6 Areas from Area One from Sacramento to the Oregon border to Area 6 in the San Diego-Mexico border. (1) Advocates make up the majority of our Volunteers and work primarily in the Military Outreach and Civilian Outreach area to include employer recognition, informing employers regarding the Uniform Services Employment and Reemployment Act (USERRA) Act of 1994, providing employment and reemployment services referral services, educating Guard and Reserve on the responsibilities and resources for a successful deployment and their obligations under USERRA. (2) Ambassadors are dedicated to a specific Component of the Guard & Reserves (Air Guard, Army Guard, Army Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air Force Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve known as the Seven Seals. They do many tasks as the Advocates while actively serving 1 Component only. They provide as an information center at battlefield assemblies, annual training, Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) events, family days, its. And, very importantly are the “go to” point of contact for Employment Programs for the California National Guard’s Employment Support Program (ESP), “Work for Warriors” and advise on the Department of Veterans Affairs e Benefits. (3) Ombudsmen provide neutral informal mediation for Service Members and their Civilian Employers attempting to resolve USERRA conflicts as necessary. If one of our 18 Ombudsmen are unable to resolve a conflict, the Service member is provided the options to file a case with the Department of Labor (DOLVets) the proponent of USERRA or hire a private attorney. Our Ombudsmen are granted 14 days to mediate a regular case and 7 days if it is a termination. At the end of those time periods the Ombudsmen destroys the data and vacates the case.

Of course, there are numerous facets of ESGR services that could be discussed, and I would be happy to provide additional information if requested. Also, if you would like to be a California ESGR volunteer I would proceed even further!

Goals for this year:

1. Establishment & Training of Virtual Presentations: As a result of the Pandemic and the limitations placed upon ESGR by the Department of Defense, we have been severely limited with our personal interactions with Guardsmen and Reservists, their employers and units. As a result, our Committee has developed a Virtual Presentation Handbook making us one of the few states in the U.S. to do so. Now, with this development, once we receive the Patriot Awards by mail at our Headquarters in Sacramento they are logged in by our Volunteer Support Technician (VST), then mailed to one of our 6 Area Chairs who then identifies one of his Advocates who then contacts the nominator of this award and offers the choices of using Virtual Presentation; present the award themselves without Virtual (In this case guidance is in writing on the correct presentation) and, lastly to mail the award to the nominees at their business address. Our Committee has invested time and effort since Virtual Presentations will continue long after the Pandemic termination. At the present time, we have received 223 Patriot awards, 88 have been processed and sent to nominators and with additional training of our Advocates we foresee most of

them completed by the end of January 2021. Please keep in mind that each month more Patriot awards will be requested by our Guardsmen and Reservists to add to our total.

2. 2021 Nominations for the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award: This is the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their outstanding support of employees serving in the Guard & Reserve. Each year, Guard and Reserve employees or a family member acting on their behalf, have the opportunity nominate their employer for the Employer Support Employer Support Freedom Award. The State Committees review nominations and submit recommendations to advance to the next round in each of the three categories: small employer, large employer, and public sector. A nationwide selection board comprised of senior Department of Defense officials, business leaders, and prior awardees select up to 15 employers to receive this prestigious award, 5 for each category. California since its inception in 1996 has received recognition in all 3 categories; for large corporations, in 2020 Chevron Corporation and 2021 Qualcomm Corporation. I was fortunate enough to present the Freedom award to Qualcomm in San Diego in September. Now, we are reviewing nominations for 2021 in all three categories and hope to submit our categories to Headquarters ESGR by 31 December 2020.

3. California ESGR State Implementation Plan: BG (Ret) Jim Combs, State Chairman conducts an annual "Strategic Planning Huddle" in December of each year with ExCom leaders using ESGR's Executive Director's "Annual Statistical Summary". The executive committee then makes required adjustment to our Strategic objectives to fulfill our vision and submits the annual State Implementation Plan (SIP) and Strategic Assessment Report (SAR) to the Western Regional Representative NLT 29 February 2021. Due to the Pandemic restrictions this meeting will be conducted through Virtual means which will in fact hamper the usual personal face to face interaction. Yet, during the present year under COVID 19 restrictions we have already completed a Diversity and Inclusion Plan (Jun 2020), a statewide "Speakers Bureau" (Oct 2020).

4. Fully launch an "Ambassador" Program for all Guard and Reserve Organizations in California (i.e., Army and Air Guard, Navy Reserve, Marine Reserve, Army Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve, Air Force Reserve). As of 1 November, California ESGR has on board 7 Military Outreach Directors (Ambassador Programs) reporting to Mr. Phil Stage, CA ESGR Vice Chair of Operations and implementation of a vigorous recruiting effort to have Ambassadors at all Guard & Reserve training sites once the Pandemic ends. Military Outreach Directors are responsible for recruiting and retaining Volunteer Ambassadors for a total number of 79 by 1 March 2021.

#### Activities:

1. 28 September 2020: Presentation of the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award, Qualcomm Corporation, San Diego CA.

2. 20 November 2020: Virtual presentation of the ESGR Pro Patria award to Manifest Works, a small business in Hollywood CA. ESGR's Pro Patria award is presented annually by each State Committee to one small, one large and one public sector employer in their state or territory. Recipients have to demonstrate the greatest support to the Guard & Reserve employees through their leadership and practices, including adopting personnel policies that make it easier for employees to participate in the National Guard and Reserve. This is the highest award that may be bestowed by an ESGR State Committee. This organization provides real-world experience into learning opportunities for those impacted by foster care, homelessness and incarceration and in 2014 the Board of Directors have been supportive of the U.S. military and have successfully hired Guard, Reserve and Veterans. Manifest was a runner-up for the small business Freedom award.

3. December 2020: CA ESGR Virtual Strategic Planning Huddle. ExCom to meet to review Strategic Objectives for FY 2020 and make adjustments for the 2021 State Implementation Plan.

4. 25 June 2020: NERE. U.S. Navy Employer Recognition Event, NAS North Island CA. Employers in the San Diego area are invited to a one day event hosted by the Chief of the Navy Reserve. The employers are quartered in a San Diego hotel the evening before (Thursday), on Friday morning buses are ready to transport them to Naval Base North Island for a day of ship tours, aircraft static displays and a buffet dinner at the Island Club. It is rotated between San Diego and Portsmouth VA.

5. 26, 27 June 2021. Annual Planning & Awards Meeting (APAM). Since COVID 19 cancelled the APAM for 2020, planning is in progress for the 2021 APAM that is to be held in San Diego, CA. If the Pandemic restrictions have not been lifted, it will be presented as Virtual.

Evaluation: Like the rest of our nation, COVID 19 has adversely affected the Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve and its numerous missions. We Volunteers are challenged to discover other strategies in order to serve our nation. We welcome this challenge and will be the better for it.

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