

South Dakota National Guard

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NEWS TIPS for the Week of December 12, 2011

Wednesday, Dec. 14, Rapid City, 10:30 a.m. (MST) – School of Mines first university to receive Seven Seals Award: RAPID CITY – The South Dakota School of Mines and Technology will receive the highly-coveted Seven Seals Award, recognizing its contributions to the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve volunteer mission.

The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), a volunteer organization under the Department of Defense, will present the award to Dr. Robert A. Wharton, School of Mines president, on behalf of the university at a 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 14, ceremony. The awards ceremony will occur in the McKeel room at the Surbeck Center on campus.

This will be the eighth award given since 2007, the first to an organization. Until now, the award has been bestowed upon seven individuals for their significant contributions and support of the ESGR mission, which is to develop and promote a culture in which all American employers support and value the military service of their employees.

Specifically, the School of Mines has supported Dr. Scott Amos, professor and graduate coordinator for civil engineering and construction management programs, in his volunteerism to the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. In his volunteer capacity, Amos is employer outreach and employment initiative director. Since joining the ESGR in January 2010 he has logged more than 700 hours working with employers who share their employees with the Department of Defense.

As employer outreach coordinator Amos helps coordinate trade shows and serves as a military unit liaison, assisting in an outreach program and conducting training. He also serves as an ombudsman under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, providing education, consultation and mediation under this law.

“Our volunteers are vital, and the school has been very supportive and has allowed him to go to our various training locations that require him to be gone for several days at a time,” said Capt. Lona Christensen, executive director of the South Dakota ESGR. “We could not do our job if it were not for the work of our volunteers. A lot of what we do is done during the business day, and Scott is needed at his work, as well.”

At the ceremony, Dr. Wharton will sign a Statement of Support for the Guard and Reserve.

“It will truly be an honor for me to accept the Seven Seals Award on behalf of the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology,” Dr. Wharton said. “We are proud to receive this award and to

sign the Statement of Support for the Guard and Reserve that formalizes our ongoing commitment to serving those who serve our nation in the armed forces.”

The award is named for the seven armed forces reserve components, the Army National Guard, Army Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve and Coast Guard Reserve.

Among the dignitaries and military leaders present will be Maj. Gen. Timothy A. Reisch, South Dakota’s 21st Adjutant General in command of the South Dakota National Guard, and Mr. Ronald W. Mielke, who is the chair of the South Dakota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve committee.

For more information, please contact Capt. Lona Christensen at (605) 737-6540.