

South Dakota National Guard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SD National Guard hosts 28th annual Legislative Dining-Out

By 2nd Lt. Chad Carlson
SDNG Public Affairs Office

PIERRE, S.D. - The South Dakota National Guard hosted the 2012 Legislative Dining-Out at the Ramkota in Pierre, Thursday, Feb. 9. This annual tradition has brought Guardsmen and the state Legislature together for a formal evening for the last 28 years, but the tradition of the dining-out and/or dining-in date back much further.

“The Guard is an organization that is rich in history and tradition,” said Maj. Corey Norris, SDNG legislative liaison officer. “This event provides the Guard an opportunity to honor the legislators by hosting them at a traditional military event where we highlight our significant accomplishments to the community, state and nation.”

The atmosphere, while formal, includes deep-rooted traditions which lighten the mood and provide both members and guests not only plenty of laughs, but a chance to learn some of the organizations history and traditions and an opportunity to recognize individual and/or unit achievements.

The Legislature was also shown a video highlighting 2011 and the many accomplishments made by the men and women of the SDNG.

“Last summer 1,957 of our Soldiers and Airmen were activated in response to the Missouri River floods and we provided support in Pierre, Fort Pierre and the Dakota Dunes areas for nearly 100 continuous days,” said Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, adjutant general of the SDNG. “We currently have more than 500 Soldiers and Airmen serving overseas while others are preparing to deploy in the months and years ahead. I couldn’t be prouder of the accomplishments of our Soldiers and Airmen. Their dedicated service truly makes a difference around the world and at home.”

In addition to the many SDNG accomplishments highlighted during the night, the Guard also recognized a family, employer and public servant with an award for their contributions to the SDNG mission.

Pro Patria Award – REI Corporation – Mission, S.D.

The awards portion of the dining-out began by presenting the REI Corporation with the 2012 South Dakota Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve Pro Patria Award.

The Pro Patria Award is presented to the one employer in their state who has provided the most exceptional support of our national defense through leadership practices and personnel policies that support their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

REI Corporation is an Electronics Manufacturing Services (EMS) contract manufacturer located on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation.

REI is a tribally-owned business employing approximately 10 people, including Staff Sgt. Gabe Doney, the operations manager for REI Corporation and a member of the South Dakota Army National Guard's 451st Firefighting Team located in Sturgis.

"Employers are inextricably linked to the nation's defense by sharing their most precious assets, their employees," said Capt. Lona Christensen, SD ESGR executive director, during the award presentation. "REI Corporation is being recognized for their outstanding contributions to the state and nation's military services. Their leadership exemplifies the patriotic spirit that is alive and well here in our great state of South Dakota."

The Williamson Militiaman Award – U.S. Senator Tim Johnson

The SDNG next awarded the 2012 Williamson Militiaman Award to U.S. Sen. Tim Johnson.

The Williamson Militiaman Award was established in 1987 by Maj. Gen. Ronald F. Williamson (retired) to recognize an individual who exemplifies the spirit of the citizen-Soldier as shown by their community leadership, their support of the National Guard and the defense of our country.

"Sen. Johnson has been an ardent supporter of the National Guard since his early days in the South Dakota Legislature," said Norris. "During his time in the state House and Senate, he was a perennial advocate for the National Guard and for the veterans of South Dakota."

Throughout his political career, Sen. Johnson has fought for the benefits, equipment, and facilities needed to ensure the success of the National Guard at home and on the battlefields abroad. As a leading voice for over 34 years in both the state and federal government on veteran and service member issues, Senator Johnson has consistently demonstrated why he is deserving of the 2012 Williamson Militiaman Award.

Past recipients of the award include: Former Adjutants General Phil Killey and Harold Sykora, former U.S. Sen. Tom Daschle and former Governors William J. Janklow and M. Michael Rounds.

The Adjutant General's Family Award – Kristine Juelfs – Fort Pierre, S.D.

To conclude the awards portion of the evening Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch awarded the 2012 Adjutant General's Family Award to Kristine Juelfs of Fort Pierre.

"As the adjutant general, I recognize the vital importance of our families to the success of our National Guard mission," Reisch said during the award presentation. "The goal of this award is to recognize those family members who support their service members in an exemplary manner while managing family, careers, or even hardship, all the while not seeking recognition for their sacrifices."

Kristine is married to Sgt. Anson Juelfs, a member of the SDNG's 200th Engineer Company. Sgt. Juelfs and the rest of the multi-role bridging company headquartered out of Pierre, with detachments in Chamberlain and Mobridge, was activated for deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, May 14, 2011. The 200th is currently serving on their year-long deployment where they are maintaining, repairing and replacing existing military bridges in Afghanistan.

"I could never do it on my own," said Sgt. Juelfs. "When I think of the spouses and especially the parents, I can't even fathom how hard it is for them, taking care of everybody else, where for us, we just have to get up and go to work every day. We kind of get the easy part of the deal, where these families take the brunt of it."

Following the awards ceremony and bringing the evening to a close, Gov. Dennis Daugaard addressed the Soldiers, Airmen in attendance. Daugaard specifically thanked Guard members for their effort during the Missouri River flooding and for their continuous support on mission both at home and abroad.

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120209-A-1234D-001: Sen. Tim Johnson, second from left, accepts the 2012 Williamson Militiaman Award on Jan. 13, 2012, in Pierre presented by, from left, Maj. Gen. Ronald Williamson (retired), Gov. Dennis Daugaard and South Dakota National Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch. The award was established in 1987 by Maj. Gen. Ronald F. Williamson (retired) to recognize an individual who exemplifies the spirit of the citizen-Soldier as shown by their community leadership and their support of the National Guard and the defense of our country. (SDNG photo by Staff Sgt. Theanne Tangen)



120209-A-CW157-107: Kristine Juelfs, of Fort Pierre, and her family received the 2012 Adjutant General's Family Award Feb. 9, 2012, in Pierre during the annual Legislative Dining-Out. The award is presented to a family member of a deployed Soldier or Airman. Kristine's husband, Sgt. Anson Juelfs, is currently deployed with the SDNG 200th Engineer Company in Afghanistan. Pictured left to right: Gov. Dennis Daugaard, Kristine Juelfs, Kristine's mother Shawn Haug, Dena and Greg Juelfs, Kristine's in-laws, and South Dakota National Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch. (SDNG photo by Staff Sgt. Theanne Tangen)



120209-A-CW157-093: REI Corporation, of Mission, accepts the Pro Patria Award at the Legislative Dining-Out in Pierre, Feb. 9, 2012. REI was nominated for the award for going above and beyond their responsibility as an employer of a deployed service member. From left to right: Ron Mielke, ESGR state chair, Gov. Dennis Daugaard, Greg Young, REI Corporation chief executive officer, South Dakota National Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, Staff Sgt. Gabe Doney, operations manager and Sue Frame, REI information technologist. (SDNG photo by Staff Sgt. Theanne Tangen)



120209-A-CW157-137: South Dakota National Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch presents Gov. Dennis Daugaard with a personalized Army Combat Uniform jacket at the Legislative Dining-Out in Pierre, Feb. 9, 2012. (SDNG photo by Staff Sgt. Theanne Tangen)

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Please contact Maj. Anthony Deiss at (605) 737-6721 or cell (605) 431-8753, or e-mail pao@sd.ngb.army.mil.