

South Dakota National Guard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Counterdrug Civil Operations Team awarded for excellence

By 2nd Lt. Chad Carlson
SDNG Public Affairs Office

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The South Dakota National Guard Counterdrug Program’s Civil Operations Team was awarded the Secretary of Defense Community Drug Awareness Award at the Pentagon Hall of Hero’s in Washington, D.C. Thursday, Oct. 18.

The award recognizes the best Drug Demand Reduction program in each military service for its effort in promoting its support of outreach and prevention programs within its communities.

“We are honored and humbled to receive an award like this for the third consecutive year,” said Maj. Robert Dejong, SDNG Counterdrug coordinator. “Our Civil Operations Team has done a tremendous job of communicating a drug-free message.”

South Dakota’s Civil Operations Team set the tone for the year during Red Ribbon Week, where they had approximately 15,000 students sign a red ribbon pledging to live their lives drug free.

“To receive recognition for our efforts at the national level is very humbling,” said Master Sgt. Kristi Palmer, SDNG Civil Operations noncommissioned officer in charge. “Our state works extremely hard to educate our youth and communities about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs by promoting positive decision making skills that will hopefully have a lifelong impact.”

The SDNG Counterdrug program started in 1996, as a one Soldier operation, with the mission of teaching the negative effects of bad choices and decisions, tobacco use, alcohol use, marijuana use and meth use.

“We engage with youth and organizations all over the state and are honored to be a part of the positive impact that we have on them,” Palmer said. “Without the hard work, dedication and passion of our Counterdrug members and community coalitions, this award would not be possible.”

“This award is a perfect example of our Civil Operations Team working together with our coalition partners to make a community event like this successful,” said Dejong. “I couldn’t be more proud of this accomplishment.”

High resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/southdakotationalguard



121018-F-EY514-049: The South Dakota National Guard Counterdrug Program receives the Secretary of Defense Community Drug Awareness Award during the DoD Red Ribbon Ceremony Oct. 18, 2012, at the Hall of Heroes in the Pentagon in Washington D.C. Accepting on behalf of the SDNG Counterdrug program was Maj. Gen. Timothy A. Reisch, SDNG adjutant general (second from left), Master Sgt. Kristi Palmer, South Dakota Civil Operations noncommissioned officer in charge (center) and Maj. Robert Dejong, South Dakota Counterdrug coordinator (third from right). Also pictured left to right, Dr. Laura J. Junor, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Readiness, Maj. Gen. (Ret) Arthur T. Dean, Chairman and CEO Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America and Joseph J. Angello, Jr., Director Operational Readiness and Safety, presented the award. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Betty J. Squatrito-Martin, National Guard Bureau Counterdrug, Public Affairs)



121018-F-EY514-059: From left, Maj. Gen. Timothy A. Reisch, South Dakota National Guard adjutant general, Maj. Robert Dejong, SDNG Counterdrug coordinator, and Master Sgt. Kristi Palmer, SDNG Civil Operations noncommissioned officer in charge, show off the Secretary of Defense Community Drug Awareness Award following the 2012 DoD Red Ribbon Ceremony Oct. 18, 2012, at the Hall of Heroes in the Pentagon in Washington D.C. The award recognizes the best Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) program in each military service for its effort in promoting its support of outreach and prevention programs within its communities. The National Guard Counterdrug Program recently revamped the DDR program, and it is now the Civil Operations Program, which focuses on coalition building. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Betty J. Squatrito-Martin, National Guard Bureau Counterdrug, Public Affairs)

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