

South Dakota National Guard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

SD Army Guard appoints first female to top enlisted position

By 2nd Lt. Becky Linder
SDNG Public Affairs Office

RAPID CITY, S.D. – The South Dakota Army National Guard appointed its first female to the highest ranking senior-enlisted position in the state during a change of responsibility ceremony Saturday, Feb. 2, at the Joint Force Headquarters building on Camp Rapid.

Command Sgt. Maj. Susan Shoe replaces State Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Zimmerman as the new state command sergeant major, the highest ranking noncommissioned officer position for the South Dakota Army National Guard.

Shoe becomes the first female to serve in the position, as well as the 8th state command sergeant major, since the position was first established in the state in 1975. In this role, Shoe will serve as the assistant adjutant general's personal advisor on all enlisted matters for the Army Guard.

“Command Sgt. Maj. Shoe was selected for this position from five of our top senior NCO applicants from within the Army National Guard,” said Brig. Gen. Craig Johnson, assistant adjutant general of the SDARNG, during the ceremony. “Her personal qualifications, leadership ability, competency and can-do attitude distinguished her as the right person, at the right time, to lead our NCO Corps.”

“This selection means a great deal to me, and I am honored to have been selected as the first female command sergeant major for South Dakota,” said Shoe. “I have so much pride for the coyote patch on our left sleeve and I will champion its history and its future for those past and present and all this patch represents.”

During the ceremony, many guests, friends and family members gathered to honor and thank Zimmerman for his service and to welcome Shoe as she begins her new assignment.

“Command Sgt. Maj. Zimmerman and I have worked together off and on for many, many years,” said Shoe. “This time around, Zimmerman has provided me with the transitional advice, knowledge and guidance to begin my tenure as the new state command sergeant major.”

Zimmerman, a resident of Rapid City, served as the state command sergeant major since 2009, and retires with nearly 30 years of military service – 26 of which was in the National Guard. Zimmerman was recently appointed as the first Secretary of Veterans Affairs in Gov. Dennis Daugaard's cabinet, where he will manage the Department of Veterans Affairs and its programs.

“My favorite part about being in this position was taking care of Soldiers needs and seeing great service members working together,” said Zimmerman. “During my time as state command sergeant major, I got to rebuild the Enlisted Promotion System, bring Soldiers and Airmen together; getting to know each other during the 2011 Missouri River flood, and I also got the opportunity to take two trips to Afghanistan and Iraq to visit Soldiers and Airmen and see them do their thing.”

Shoe, who has more than 23 years of military service, 16 of those as a member of the SDARNG, will also continue her full-time duties as the senior logistics NCO for Joint Force Headquarters.

Shoe will be responsible for assisting and advising Brig. Gen. Johnson, as well as advising the state’s new senior enlisted advisor, Chief Master Sgt. James Welch, on all Soldier issues that affect the enlisted and NCO Corps within the nearly 3,300 members of the Army Guard.

“Command Sgt. Maj. Shoe is very well prepared to complete this challenging assignment and it’s great to have someone with her depth and breadth of experience leading our NCO Corps,” said Johnson. “I know she will be relied upon heavily by me and our senior leadership as we move forward in this great organization.”

Shoe will also observe unit training in all 24 SDARNG communities, attend mobilization and demobilization events, ensure Soldier morale and wellbeing and make certain Soldiers and their families know that all key leaders have their best interests at heart.

“Maintaining a cohesive and a relevant force, as well as ensuring clear and concise communication are enhanced will be the priorities of the adjutant general, assistant adjutant general and myself,” said Shoe, when asked about her goals on the new position. “Brig. Gen. Johnson and I believe that solutions come from the field. We will be working together in order to find appropriate solutions to the difficulties endured by South Dakotas finest.”

Throughout her career in the Guard, Shoe’s assignments include: personnel administrative sergeant, legal NCO, training NCO, readiness NCO, personnel services NCO, team leader, quality assurance NCO, operations sergeant, warrant officer candidate school instructor and senior logistics NCO.

Shoe lives in Rapid City with her husband, David, and her two rescue Italian greyhounds.

“I am very proud of the long lineage my family has given to our state and nation. My husband is prior-service Army, my father, Neil Harris, served more than 43 years between the Army and the SDARNG, my stepfather served as a doctor in the Army, and my great-uncle was a captain in the U.S. Navy and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery,” said Shoe. “I couldn’t be more proud to be in this position to continue my family history and serve others as my relatives served before me.”

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130203-Z-AB123-001: Command Sgt. Maj. Susan Shoe holds a ceremonial saber as she is appointed to the South Dakota Army National Guard’s highest ranking senior-enlisted position, state command sergeant major, during a change of responsibility ceremony Feb. 2, 2013, at the Joint Force Headquarters building on Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D. Shoe replaces former State Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Zimmerman, who served in the position since 2009. Shoe becomes the first female to serve in the position, as well as the 8th state command sergeant major, since the position was first established in the state in 1975. (SDNG photo by Staff Sgt. Heather Trobee) (RELEASED)



130203-Z-AB123-002: Command Sgt. Maj. Susan Shoe is appointed to the South Dakota Army National Guard's highest ranking senior-enlisted position, state command sergeant major, during a change of responsibility ceremony Feb. 2, 2013, at the Joint Force Headquarters building on Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D. Shoe replaces former State Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Zimmerman, who served in the position since 2009. Shoe becomes the first female to serve in the position, as well as the 8th state command sergeant major, since the position was first established in the state in 1975. (SDNG photo by Staff Sgt. Heather Trobee) (RELEASED)



130203-Z-AB123-003: Former South Dakota Army National Guard State Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Zimmerman speaks during a change of responsibility ceremony Feb. 2, 2013, at the Joint Force Headquarters building on Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D. Zimmer is replaced by new State Command Sgt. Maj. Susan Shoe, after retiring with nearly 30 years of military service – 26 of which was in the National Guard. Zimmerman, who served in the position since 2009, was recently appointed as the first Secretary of Veterans Affairs in Gov. Dennis Daugaard's cabinet, where he will manage the Department of Veterans Affairs and its programs. (SDNG photo by Staff Sgt. Heather Trobee) (RELEASED)



SHOE_SUSAN_CSM: State Command Sgt. Maj. Susan Shoe. (SDNG courtesy photo) (RELEASED)

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