



---

# NEWS RELEASE

---

**DATE:** September 3, 2014  
**CONTACT:** Michael Holub

**PHONE:** (708) 579-0687  
**E-mail:** mholub@villageoflagrange.com

## **IL STATE REPRESENTATIVE RECOGNIZED FOR PATRIOTIC SUPPORT OF MILITARY**

*STATE REP. LASHAWN FORD HIGHLY SUPPORTIVE OF THOSE WHO SERVE IN THE GUARD OR RESERVE*

**CHICAGO, IL** – The Illinois Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), an office of the Department of Defense, recognized a member of the Illinois House of Representatives with the ESGR “PATRIOTIC EMPLOYER AWARD” in recognition of his extraordinary support of a member of his staff. Representative LaShawn K. Ford was presented with the award by Michael Holub, of Illinois ESGR, with thanks for the continued support of the men and women in uniform, who play a critical role in our security at home and around the world. The nominator for this award was Jonathan Tate, who is a Sergeant in the Illinois Army National Guard assigned to the 108th Sustainment Brigade. Sgt. Tate is currently deployed and was unable to attend the presentation.

The Patriotic Employer Award is presented after ESGR receives a nomination from a Guardsmen or Reservist in Illinois. Jonathan Tate works for Rep. Ford and submitted the nomination because of how supportive the Representative is of his military commitments during weekend drills and annual training. In his nomination narrative to ESGR Tate wrote, “Mr. Ford has always supported my military schedule without any question. Even when my unit asks for last second volunteers for training events, all I have to do is tell him the same day.” Jonathan also wrote, “Regardless of how long my training is, I never have to worry about my job when I come back. Mr. Ford always makes the transitions back for me smooth and even gives me days off to rest before coming to work after long missions”.

Jonathan Tate’s praise of Representative Ford did not end there and he added, “Mr. Ford has helped to support numerous functions in my unit and he tries to attend all of my military events, even if it is after work hours. When I was in the hospital for a brain tumor, he consistently visited me and ensured I was taken care of; he is the standard of how a supervisor should treat military service members.” Jonathan praised Representative Ford for utilizing his knowledge of the military and allowing Tate to create a Veteran’s program for the 8th District. Tate also emphasized that Representative Ford attended his deployment ceremony and has been emailing him twice a week during this current deployment.

– MORE –

According to Colonel (ret) Ron Bacci, State Chair of Illinois ESGR, "The Patriotic Employer Award publicly recognizes employers who provide outstanding patriotic support and cooperation to their employees, who like the Minutemen before them, have answered their nation's call to serve. Supportive employers are critical to maintaining the strength and readiness of the nation's National Guard and Reserve units."

Michael Holub, who is the Public Affairs Director for Illinois ESGR added, "Representative LaShawn Ford is leading by example and he and his staff now join thousands of employers who have demonstrated their support of service in the National Guard and Reserve through full compliance with the statutory requirements of the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-Employment Rights Act law."

After the presentation, Rep. Ford accepted and signed a Statement of Support for the Guard and Reserve. Michael Holub stated, "I would like to thank Representative Ford for publicly recognizing the important role of the National Guard and Reserve by signing this Statement of Support. When an employer recognizes and appreciates the value of service in the Guard and Reserve it is a welcome show of support to our men and women in uniform."

Representative Ford and his staff now join other organizations in pledging:

- They fully recognize, honor and enforce the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-Employment Rights Act or USERRA.
- Their managers and supervisors will have the tools they need to effectively manage those employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.
- They appreciate the values, leadership and unique skills service members bring to the workforce and will encourage opportunities to hire Guardsmen, Reservists, and Veterans.
- They will continually recognize and support our country's service members and their families in peace, in crises and in war.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is an office of the Department of Defense and is the lead advocate within the Department of Defense for Reserve Component employers. Its mission is to gain and maintain the support of employers for service in the Reserve Components by increasing awareness of the law, recognizing outstanding support and helping to resolve conflicts through informal mediation. Thousands of ESGR volunteers nationwide provide free education, consultation and, if needed, neutral mediation for employers of Guardsmen and Reservists. More information about ESGR employer outreach programs and services is available at <http://www.esgr.mil>.

Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/IllinoisESGR>



Photo caption: Pictured here (left to right) are