



South Dakota Department of the Military
South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



BLACK HILLS CORP NAMED FINALIST FOR DOD AWARD

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve announced Black Hills Corporation of Rapid City, S.D., is a finalist for the 2015 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. The Freedom Award is the DoD's highest recognition given to employers for exceptional support of National Guard and Reserve employees.

Thirty employers were selected from a pool of 2,960 nominations submitted earlier this year by National Guard and Reserve service members.

A board including senior DoD officials and other representatives of prior recipient organizations will now select up to 15 Freedom Award recipients to be honored at a ceremony in Washington later this summer.

Black Hills Corporation was nominated for the award by Corey Virture, an employee and soldier in the South Dakota Army National Guard's 235th Military Police Company.

Black Hills Corporation also provided gift cards to pay for meals on Mondays, shoveled snow and mowed Virture's lawn for his family. In addition to helping Virture, the company also donated six computers to help the soldiers in his unit communicate with loved ones while overseas.

Vice President Vance Crocker, a retired lieutenant colonel who served in the SDARNG for 23 years, accepted the award on behalf of Black Hills Corporation.

"It's a great honor for Black Hills Corporation to be selected as a finalist," said Crocker. "But the true honor goes to the military men and women who go in harm's way to protect the freedoms we so often take for granted. It's great to give back to the Guard and Reserve members and their families - it's the least we can do."

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REDEDICATION OF THE CIVIL WAR MONUMENT

May, June and July are months filled with days devoted to honor our heroes and celebrate their accomplishments. There is Loyalty Day, Victory in Europe Day, Military Spouse Appreciation Day, Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day and Independence Day. This year, Governor Daugaard afforded us one more opportunity by rededicating the Civil War Monument in Pierre June 1.

During the Rededication, Gov. Daugaard read the remarks made in 1920 by Gov. Peter Norbeck; SDDVA's Secretary Larry Zimmerman read a speech and dedication remarks made by the Grand Army of the Republic Commander in Chief Dan Hall; and Chaplain Michael Griffin read a Chaplains Prayer recited at the dedication by Rev. H.H. Gunderson.

Improvements made to the memorial include a new

flagpole, lighting, sidewalks, and interpretive boards outlining the history of the monument.

SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman has a gift for working a crowd and has earned the nickname "magnet." He's a crowd puller that no matter the setting, can find a veteran with a unique situation, a unique issue that needs fixed or a unique story. We all knew that it would be impossible for him to pull a "Civil War Veteran" from the crowd. However, lo and behold, he was able to find the granddaughter of a Civil War veteran. 99-year-old



Hazel Bush Baumberger stole his heart as she shared her grandfather's story. Zimmerman presented Baumberger with one of his coins and thanked her and her family for William's service.

SDDVA Secretary Zimmerman noted that events like this have more meaning to him when he can make the personal connection.



MESSAGE FROM SDDVA SECRETARY “SHAPING THE FUTURE”

During the recent rededication of the Civil War Monument in Pierre, I had the distinct honor to play the role of Daniel Hall, commander-in-chief of the National Grand Army of the Republic. Hall’s words 95 years ago remind me of the hundreds of memorials that have been built throughout this great state. He said, “It needs no words. It is itself an oration. It assures us that our dead are held in remembrance – those dead who gave their lives for the security of the citizen and the union of the States. The granite monument commemorates the life, the deeds of patriotism, and the heroism of Veterans.”

Communities in South Dakota have erected monuments dedicated to those individuals who went off to war and never came back, to those that came back in part, and to all those who stepped out of the crowd and swore an oath to support and defend the constitution of the United States of America against all enemies. These memorials are not about war, they are about people and paying tribute to all the military service personnel who honorably served their country.

Not every veteran has known the full fury of battle. But most count their time in uniform among the defining experiences of their lives. The military drew out the best that was in them, instilling the highest standards of diligence, discipline, and loyalty. That is a bond joining every veteran from every branch of the service. Whether drafted or enlisted, commissioned or non-commissioned, each took an oath, lived by a code, and stood ready to fight and die for their country.

The military life is built around sacrifice and complete devotion to America. If you have lived that life, then you know the meaning of commitment to a greater cause.

Conflicts differ but our basic military asset has not changed at all. It is the character, the daring, and the resourcefulness of those who do the fighting. Our young men and women that serve must know that their sacrifice is appreciated and their courage is honored. They must know that there are resources to help them when they return. We prepare them for the cultural shock of going off to war and we need to ensure that they are prepared for their return to civilian life.

I’m proud of the team of experts that we have working at the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs (SDDVA). Collectively, our state veterans service officers, field officers and education personnel have 197 years of military service. They have worn the boots, walked the trenches, conducted maneuvers, commanded troops, sustained missions and protected our freedoms. They are veterans that have borne the battle and are committed to ensure that our heroes receive the highest quality services possible.

The stone used for the memorials represents lasting strength. Our strength and success at SDDVA is the timeliness, the quality, and the consistency of the services and support we provide our veterans.



“Their bravery, their resourcefulness and their patriotism marks them as America’s finest citizens.”

ROBERTS COUNTY OPENING CVSO POSITION

Larry Goette, Roberts County VSO, has a legacy of enhancing the lives of our veterans. He has committed his life to improving the lives of our veterans and their families. Goette has shared with the Commission that he plans to retire in a couple of years and as such would like to hire in a CVSO immediately that can work side by side with him, learning the ever-changing rules and regulations of the federal programs and benefits.

The Roberts County Commission has agreed and as such will advertise the position effective June 8, and is open until filled. Goette notes that interested veterans can apply to Roberts County Veterans Service Officer, 411 2nd Avenue E. Suite 2, Sisseton, SD 57262. Veterans interested in the position are encouraged to call Larry and visit with him about the position (605-698-7376).

Filling this position now affords the new CVSO to learn the ropes from Goette before his exit.

OGLALA SIOUX TRIBE HIRES NEW TVSO

Jerlene Arredondo has been named the Tribal Veterans Service Officer for the Oglala Sioux Tribe.

Arredondo began her duties as the TVSO in May. SDDVA Field Officer William Huffmon has had the opportunity to meet with Jerlene and review the materials the Department provides to assist her with her duties.

Jerlene's email address is: nativevets@goldenwest.net. Her mailing address has been changed to PO Box 324, Pine Ridge, SD 57770.

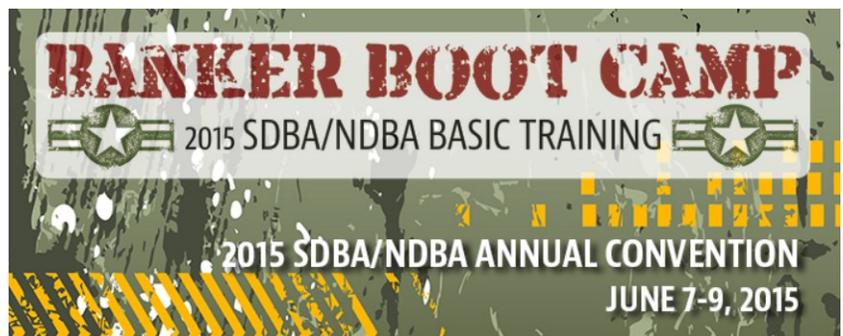
Jerlene served in the United States Marine Corps from 1988-1991 reaching the rank of Corporal. She received the National Defense Service Medal. Jerlene is a member of American Legion Post 321.

Please join SDDVA in welcoming Jerlene.



SDDVA TO HAVE PRESENCE AT SD BANKERS CONFERENCE

SDDVA Program Managers Heather Henderson and Steve Oliva will be representing South Dakota Department at the SD Bankers Association Conference. They will be providing information on the Department and the role we play in enhancing the lives of our veterans, the State Veterans Home and the Endowment Fund.



Sioux River Sportsmen are hosting
a Game, Fish, and Parks

Step Outside Event

June 28th • 12 to 4 p.m.

East Highway 18, across from the Hiawatha Golf Club
benefits to Warriors Never Give Up, bring your whole
family to Sporting and outdoor activities
Shooting • Education • Fun



WARRIORS

★ NEVER GIVE UP ★

HEROES. HUNTING. HEALING.



GIRL SCOUTS HONOR SOLDIERS WITH DISTINCTIVE WOMAN OF SERVICE AWARD

Girl Scouts-Dakota Horizons honored a select group of women in recognition of their community leadership at their 21st Annual Women of Distinction Event, May 14, at the Rushmore Plaza Holiday Inn. This year, three South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers were presented with the Distinctive Women of Service Award.

The Distinctive Woman of Service Award, which recognizes a member or employee of the U.S. Armed Forces who strives to make the world a better place and has made a contribution of time and support to the community, was presented to Sgt. 1st Class Carolyn Tedford, Sgt. Rachel Sirignano and Maj. Rebecca Trygstad.

Tedford, who has served in the military for the past 30 years, currently serves as a regional recruiter who enlists members of the community to serve in the Army National Guard as doctors, dentists, attorneys and pastors.

"I'm inspired to serve by what Theodore Roosevelt used to say, 'This country will not be a good place for any of us to live in, unless we make it a good place for all of us to live in,'" said Tedford. Serving in the military is one way Tedford lives up to Roosevelt's belief. "The military gives us a quest to better ourselves," said Tedford. "I enjoy being a role model for young girls and my fellow women soldiers. It's important to mentor and give guidance to others."

Sirignano has been a member of the SDARNG's Company C, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment for the past 10 years as a flight medic and works full time as an emergency medical technician in Sturgis. "I nominated Sgt. Sirignano because she is always willing to volunteer for extra tasks and responsibilities," said Sgt. Courtney Tyrrell, a fellow Guardsman. "As a flight medic and EMT, she has thrived in an environment that is still predominately male. She is an example that women can do the same job at the same level of excellence as their male counterparts." Trygstad, has been a member of the SDARNG for the past 18 years and she currently serves as the 139th Brigade Support Battalion administrative officer.

"I believe that it is important to be an active member of your community," said Trygstad. "We each have a role to play in making our community the best it can be whether that is volunteering at your local school district, being actively involved in local organizations, or just volunteering your time at a local event."

In addition to her National Guard duties, Trygstad serves as the president for the Brookings County Veterans Affairs Committee, State and National Guard Associations of the United States, volunteers as an instructor for the South Dakota State University ROTC program, and helped pilot the Junior Achievement program at Sioux Valley Elementary for the past three years.

"I think as adults, we are inspired our youth by being a role model who respects and serves others," said Trygstad. "There are many youth programs that offer an opportunity to serve, whether that is Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts or 4-H. The youth that participate in these organizations learn a sense of responsibility, hard work, community service and develop leadership skills that are key to their success in the future."



From left: Sgt. 1st Class Carolyn Tedford, Sgt. Rachel Sirignano and Maj. Rebecca Trygstad

Upcoming Events

2015

Jun. 18—SFVAHCS Veterans Town Hall—SFVAHCS Auditorium—5:00 pm
 Jun. 18-21—VFW State Convention—Yankton, SD
 Jun. 20—Military Order of the Purple Heart Department of Dakotas State Convention—DAV Headquarters—Sioux Falls
 Jun. 24—Black Hills Job Fair—Western Dakota Tech—Rapid City—12:30—5:00 pm (MT)
 Jun.. 25-28—American Legion 97th Annual State Convention—Huron Crossroads Convention Center
 Jul. 6—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
 Jul. 15—SD Veterans Council—DAV Headquarters—Sioux Falls—10:00 am
 Aug. 5-9—AVTT Traveling Vietnam Wall Comes to Sioux Falls (Sanford Pentagon Sports Complex)
 Aug. 24-27—SDDVA Annual Benefit School—Ramkota—Pierre
 Sept. 11 — Stand Down—Wagner—National Guard Armory—9:00 am—1:00 pm
 Sept. 18—POW-MIA Ceremony—Sioux Falls
 Oct. 9—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am (MT)
 Oct. 10—DAV Fall Conference—DAV Headquarters—Sioux Falls
 Dec. 8— Governor’s Budget Address—Pierre

2016

Jan. 12—SD Legislative Session Opens—Pierre
 Jan. 14—Veterans Legislative Breakfast—Pierre
 Jan. 27-28—State Tribal Relations Days—Pierre
 April 15-17—DAV Convention—Rapid City

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