



DC | DEPARTMENT of
HUMAN SERVICES

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DHS Director and Chief of Staff Receive DoD's ESGR Patriot Award

ESGR Patriot Award Recognizes Employers Who Provide Support to National Guard and Reservist Employees

(WASHINGTON, DC) – Laura Green Zeilinger, DHS director, and David Ross, DHS chief of staff, were presented the Office of the Secretary of Defense's Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Patriot Award by Brig. Gen. Aaron R. Dean, II, adjutant general for the District of Columbia National Guard and Stanley Williams, state chair for the D.C. ESGR.

An employee serving in the National Guard or Reserve, or the spouse of a Guard or Reserve member, may nominate individual supervisors and bosses for the Patriot Award for support provided directly to the nominating Servicemember and his or her family. The Patriot Award reflects the efforts made to support citizen warriors through a wide-range of measures including flexible schedules, time off prior to and after deployment, caring for families, and granting leaves of absence if needed.

Director Zeilinger and David Ross were nominated by two members of the Office of Director's Staff who are Guardsmen – Max Silva, a National Guard Airmen with Rhode Island Air National Guard's 143rd Civil Engineering Squadron and Kevin Valentine, Jr., a National Guard Soldier with the D.C. Army National Guard's 715th Public Affairs Detachment.

Director Zeilinger and David Ross received the Patriot Award for their continued support of Guardsmen to include arranging interviews during a deployment, supporting employees who were activated for deployment with little prior notice, supporting continuity efforts during deployments, and for preserving Servicemember employment upon their return.

David Ross, as Director Zeilinger's chief of staff, has made a concerted effort to hire more Guardsmen and Reservists who are qualified for vacant positions. He's also created a system to efficiently run the DHS's Office of the Director while Servicemembers are deployed or otherwise called to duty.

Director Zeilinger received this award as she also launches into Mayor Muriel Bowser's newly formed sabbatical program that enables long-tenured, in good standing, members of her cabinet to take a prescribed time to rest to return with more energy, drive, and vigor to continue being agents of change in the District.

District Government is hiring and continues to show with innovative practices like a sabbatical and support for Guardsmen, Reservists, and Veterans, that it is a great place to work and serve.

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