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Purpose of the NGAUS Awards Program

The National Guard Association of the United States Awards Program is designed to recognize individuals and organizations who, by **superior performance**, acts of **heroism** or **meritorious service**, make a contribution to the goals of the National Guard Association of the United States, to the purpose and effectiveness of the broader National Guard or to the stability and security of the United States of America.

Note: All Guard officer nominations must be a member of NGAUS.

The roots of the Awards Program go back to 1936 with the presentation of the first Pershing Plaque. In 1950, the Distinguished Service Medal was adopted. Since the Program's inception, nine more individual awards have been established: The Harry S. Truman Award, the Association's highest award; the Montgomery Medal; the Meritorious Service Award; the Valley Forge Cross for Heroism; the Charles Dick Medal of Merit; the Patrick Henry Award, the Garde Nationale Trophy and the Theodore Roosevelt Leadership Award for Company Grade Officers. The Eagle Rising Award for Warrant Officers is the newest addition.

Awards Procedures

Presentation of Awards

Awards are presented during the Association's annual General Conference to afford **maximum national visibility** to award recipients by their National Guard peers.

Committee on Awards

The NGAUS Awards Committee is responsible for reviewing the NGAUS Awards Program for adequacy, administrative effectiveness and makes program changes/recommendations to the Board of Directors, as necessary. The Awards Committee reviews all nominations for awards and makes final selection recommendations to the Board of Directors.

Deadline

The deadline for the receipt of nominations for all NGAUS Individual Awards is **Feb. 15**. Nominations should be addressed to the attention of:

NGAUS Awards Program
One Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

Harry S. Truman Award for Distinguished Service in Support of National Defense

The Harry S Truman Award, authorized by the NGAUS Board of Directors in 1968, is the highest recognition conferred upon an individual by the Association. Recipients have made sustained contributions of exceptional and far-reaching magnitude to the defense and security of the United States in a manner worthy of recognition at the national level.

Description

For three decades, the Truman has been a very distinctive award. It comprises 13 pewter sculpted minutemen, representing the 13 original colonies.

Criteria

The individual to be selected should have made **sustained contributions of exceptional and far-reaching magnitude to the defense and security of the United States** in a manner worthy of recognition at the national level.

The Truman Award is **intended for the civilian and military leaders of America at the national level**. Although a single deed or action may be considered as qualification for this award if it is sufficient magnitude and significance, weight should be give to **sustained contributions**. Past recipients have been Presidents, Senators, Congressmen and senior general officers.

Nomination and Selection Procedures

Any member of the Awards Committee, the Board of Directors or an elected officer of NGAUS, state association President or Adjutants General may nominate an individual to receive this award.

The letter should contain clear and detailed statement of the nature and magnitude of the nominated individual's contributions to an improved defense posture. The Truman Award is usually presented not more than once annually. However, if in the view of the Awards Committee or the Board of Directors, no individual has met the requirements of the award, no award will be given. An individual may not receive the Award more than once.

Montgomery Medal

The Montgomery Medal provides a mechanism to recognize an individual (or organization) who provides outstanding support in the pursuit of the NGAUS objectives. It was first presented in 2004.

Description

The award bears former Rep. Sonny Montgomery's likeness on a five-sided medal. The shape is intended to symbolize not only his contributions to the Guard, but the entire Unites States military and veterans. The medal is constructed in high relief to give the medal a look of great depth and dimension as opposed to a flat strike. The Capitol Dome rises from the top of the medal. "G.V. Sonny Montgomery" is inscribed at the top with "NGAUS" inscribed at the bottom and two stars on two of the sides. The medal is attached to a red and white ribbon.

Criteria

Any individual (elected official, staffer or private citizen) or organization who/which **renders outstanding support to the pursuit of the NGAUS purposes and objectives**, as stated in the Association by-laws.

Nominations and Selection Procedures

Any member of the Awards Committee, the Board of Directors or an elected officer of NGAUS, state association President or Adjutants General may nominate an individual or organization to receive this award.

The Montgomery Medal is usually presented not more than once annually. However, if in the view of the Awards Committee or the Board of Directors, no individual or organization has met the requirements of the award, no award will be given. An individual or organization may not receive more than one Montgomery Medal.

Charles Dick Medal of Merit

The Charles Dick Medal of Merit was established in 1988 and is designed to recognize the contributions to the National Guard by elected representatives to legislative bodies at the state and national levels. The medal is named in honor of Major General Charles Dick, NGAUS president from 1902 to 1909, a major general in the Ohio National Guard, a Congressman and later a Senator. Dick was responsible for the passage of the Dick Acts of 1903 and 1908 that established the foundation of the modern National Guard.

Eligibility

Any member of a state legislative body, the United States Congress or any state governor.

Description

The Charles Dick Medal of Merit is a 2 1/2 inch gold plated medal bearing the likeness of Charles Dick. The medal is attached to a gold and red ribbon and accompanied by a plate engraved with the recipients' name all of which is encased in a wooden glass frame.

Criteria

An individual must have **distinguished him/herself over an extended period of time in their support to the National Guard** through service in a state or national elected legislative body.

Superior performance of **normal duty alone does not justify award** of this medal. An individual must have provided **exceptionally strong support** to the National Guard to clearly merit this medal.

The support of the individual must be such that it has had a **lasting effect on the future of the National Guard**. The positive affect and the results of the act should outlast the tenure in office of the individual.

Nominations and Selection Procedures

Any member of the Awards Committee, the Board of Directors or an elected officer of NGAUS, state association President or Adjutants General may nominate an individual to receive this award. An individual may not receive more than one Charles Dick Medal. More than one award may be given in a calendar year. By action of the Board of Directors, exceptions may be made to the restriction that an individual may not receive more than one.

Patrick Henry Award

One of the newer awards, created in 1989, is the Patrick Henry Award (the civilian counterpart to the NGAUS Distinguished Service Medal). The Patrick Henry Award is designed to provide recognition to local officials and civic leaders, who in a position of great responsibility distinguished themselves with outstanding and exceptional service to the Armed Forces of the United States, the National Guard or NGAUS.

Eligibility

Any civilian, not eligible for an award in any other NGAUS category, may be nominated for the Patrick Henry Award. Primarily designed for recognition of local officials (city, county, state), civic leaders (ESGR, civilian aides, corporate CEOs) and legislative staffers.

Description

This award is a walnut plaque with a laser-likeness of Patrick Henry centered at the top of the award. Above the image of Patrick Henry is the inscription "The Patrick Henry Award" and below the image the recipient's name and date the honor was received. Also, written below the image is "National Guard Association of the United States."

Criteria

An individual must have distinguished him/herself **over an extended period of time** in their support of the Armed Forces of the United States, the National Guard or NGAUS.

Superior performance of **normal duty alone will not justify award** of this honor. An individual must have provided exceptionally strong support for the National Guard to clearly merit this award. The support of the individual must be such that **the readiness and the future of the Guard have been positively affected** and the results of the support should remain beyond the individual's affiliation with the National Guard.

Service narrative should provide specifics as to the nature, e.g., legislation passed and enacted, versus sponsored; and the period of service being recognized be clearly stated.

Nomination and Selection Procedure

Any member of the Awards Committee, the Board of Directors or an elected officer of NGAUS, state association President or Adjutants General may nominate an individual to receive this award. An individual may not receive more than one Patrick Henry Award. More than one award may be given in a calendar year. By action of the Board of Directors, exceptions may be made to the restriction that an individual may not receive more than one.

Distinguished Service Medal

In 1950, NGAUS established a decoration for distinguished service as its first major individual award. The Distinguished Service Medal was conceived to provide recognition for an individual who, as member of the Armed Forces (Active, Guard or Reserve), performed exceptionally outstanding service to the United States, to the Armed Forces of the United States or to NGAUS.

Eligibility

Any member of the National Guard, NGAUS or the Armed Forces of the United States, or any civilian assigned to the National Guard Bureau is eligible to receive the Distinguished Service Medal.

Description

The Distinguished Service Medal is a medal measuring 1-1/2 inches in diameter, bearing a gold striking of the NGAUS seal in raised features. A scarlet silk moiré ribbon, which is 2 inches long, suspends the medal and 1-3/8 wide, topped by a bar inscribed "Distinguished Service" in raised letters.

Criteria

An individual must have distinguished him/herself in particularly outstanding service to the United States Government, any of the Armed Forces of the United States, including the National Guard or NGAUS.

Outstanding performance of **normal duty alone will not justify the award** of this medal. An individual must have offered **exceptionally outstanding contributions over an extended period of time** to clearly merit the award of this medal. Contributions to state associations or to the state National Guard **may** be considered, but this award is **intended to recognize national level contributions.**

Nominations and Selection Procedures

Any member of the Awards Committee, the Board of Directors or an elected officer of NGAUS, state association President or Adjutants General may nominate an individual to receive this award. An individual may not receive more than one Distinguished Service Medal. More than one award may be given in a calendar year. By action of the Board of Directors, exceptions may be made to the restriction that an individual may not receive more than one

Meritorious Service Award

NGAUS created the Meritorious Service Award in 1972 based upon a perceived need for an additional Association award that would specifically recognize individuals for significant contributions to the United States Government, the Armed Forces of the United States or NGAUS.

Eligibility

Any member of the National Guard, NGAUS or the Armed Forces of the United States, or any civilian assigned to a National Guard Bureau or state headquarters is eligible to receive the Meritorious Service Award.

Description

This award is a walnut plaque that has the NGAUS seal engraved in it. Beneath the NGAUS seal is the inscription “Meritorious Service Award” with an area provided for the recipient's name to be inscribed.

Criteria

An individual must have accomplished an **outstanding achievement** on behalf of the National Guard or NGAUS.

Superior performance by an individual must have been such as to clearly identify them as having **played a key role** in the accomplishment for which the award is to be given. **Superior performance of duties normal to the grade, branch, specialty or assignment and experience of an individual are not considered adequate for this award**.

A single accomplishment **may** be considered as qualification for this award if it is of sufficient significance and magnitude. Particular considerations will be given to those individuals who have contributed **outstanding service on a sustained basis**. Personal dedication and self-sacrifice also will be regarded as factors deserving consideration.

Nomination and Selection Procedures

Any member of the Awards Committee, the Board of Directors or an elected officer of NGAUS, state association President or Adjutants General may nominate an individual to receive this award. An individual may not receive more than one Meritorious Service Award. More than one award may be given in a calendar year. By action of the Board of Directors, exceptions may be made to the restriction that an individual may not receive more than one.

Meritorious Service Certificate

Individuals who demonstrate outstanding performance or achievement, but whose contributions in the opinion of the Awards Committee does not warrant presentation of the Meritorious Service Award, may be awarded the Meritorious Service Certificate in lieu thereof. The certificate includes a citation recognizing outstanding performance or achievement and will be forwarded to the state Adjutant General or state association for presentation at the state and/or local level at an appropriate occasion.

Valley Forge Cross for Heroism

Named for an episode in the nation's early history synonymous with the Militia and exemplifying great courage, the Valley Forge Cross became part of the program in 1973. It is presented to members of the National Guard who have distinguished themselves by performing acts of heroism that otherwise might not be recognized due to the National Guard's peacetime status.

Description

The Valley Forge Cross is a medal measuring 1 3/4 inches by 1 3/4 inches, bearing a cross surrounded by four eagle-and-shield devices such as appear on the official NGAUS seal. The cross has a surrounding gold border, with the interior shallowed and bearing an enamel finish. A recessed profile of a colonial soldier occupies the center of the cross. The ring bears the legend "Valley Force Cross" in raised letters. For added distinction, the cross is suspended by a ring from a silk moiré ribbon 1 1/4 inches long and 1 3/8 inches wide, composed of altering 1/8-inch bands of white, gold and maroon on either side of a central 1/2 inch white band.

Eligibility

The nominee must be an active, bona fide member of the National Guard at the time of the act.

Criteria

The individual must have performed an act of **heroism clearly beyond what reasonably might have been expected under the circumstances** and of such a nature that had it not been attempted, no criticism would be justified. The nominee's act of heroism was voluntary. Performance of the act **placed the nominee in personal jeopardy**. This award frequently will encompass lifesaving acts. It also may be appropriate under circumstances in which extraordinary performance has contributed to the alleviation of public tragedy or to the preservation of public property provided that the **nominee's life was in jeopardy as a result of voluntary action.**

Nomination and Selection Procedures

Any individual having knowledge of an act worthy of the award for the Valley Forge Cross may submit a nomination. It is recommended, however, that nominations be submitted by the nominee's immediate commanding officer, through normal official channels after full investigation and preparation of supporting evidence. More than one award may be given in a calendar year.

Nomination submissions should include:

- A fully detailed chronological narration of what occurred, utilizing exact times and dates, and full identification of all principles, including witnesses. Clear and complete reporting of facts will more likely achieve the object of the recommendation than flowery generalities.
- A proposed citation, one paragraph in length.
- Signed statements of at least one, and preferably two, eyewitnesses. Such documents as extracts from official records, sketches, maps, photos and newspaper clippings that help establish the validity of the nomination may be used as supporting evidence. In cases where no eyewitnesses are available, the requirement may be waived if personal heroism is completely self-evident and the award can legitimately be made without question.
- A signed statement by the individual nominated, describing the act in detail, also may be regarded as important supportive evidence.
- Whenever possible, letters from both the nominee's battalion/squadron/group/brigade commander and the state Adjutant General endorsing the nomination also should be submitted.

Any heroic act performed by a member of the National Guard is eligible for consideration without regard to his duty status at the time of the event. It can be awarded while on military duty, in state status or while acting in a civilian capacity.

The Valley Forge Cross (or the Valley Forge Cross Certificate) may be awarded posthumously. In such cases, the medal or certificate will be presented to the recipient's next of kin.

Valley Forge Certificate

The Valley Forge Certificate is awarded to those individuals who display heroism and for whom nominations for the Valley Forge Cross are submitted, but whose act, in the view of the Awards Committee, fell short of that required for award of the Valley Forge Cross. The certificate will include a citation or other tangible evidence demonstrating the nature of the heroism displayed. It will be forwarded to the appropriate state Adjutant General or state association for presentation at the state and/or local level at an appropriate occasion.

Garde Nationale Trophy

The Garde Nationale Trophy, first presented in 1989, recognizes significant achievement of members of the National Guard in their civilian endeavors. It is so named to honor the Marquis de Lafayette and the roots of the National Guard name.

The Garde Nationale Trophy may recognize achievements in medicine, science, art, industry, etc. An individual must have distinguished him or herself with a significant accomplishment in their civilian endeavor that generated recognition by their civilian peers and made a significant contribution to their particular field.

Eligibility

Any member of the National Guard.

Description

A lead crystal, European style trophy cup, with the Concord Minuteman on the front and the NGAUS logo etched on the back. The crystal cup is mounted on a walnut base.

Criteria

An individual must have distinguished him or herself with a **significant accomplishment in their civilian endeavor that generated recognition by their civilian peers**. The accomplishment made a significant contribution to the particular field.

Nomination and Selection Procedures

Any member of the Awards Committee, the Board of Directors or an elected officer of NGAUS, state association Presidents or Adjutants General may nominate an individual to receive this award. An individual may not receive more than one Garde Nationale Trophy. More than one award may be given in a calendar year.

Theodore Roosevelt Leadership Awards for Company Grade Officers

This award was established to annually recognize the achievements and dedicated service of Army and Air National Guard junior officers who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and professionalism in their services to country and community. This award was first presented in 2006.

Eligibility

Nominees must be second lieutenant, first lieutenant, or captain serving in either the Army National Guard or the Air National Guard during the award period for which the award is given. Nominees **must be members of both NGAUS and their state associations**.

Criteria

Whole-career information will be submitted and evaluated to include: accomplishments in duty assignments; career progression, training, and professional development activities; community service demonstrating leadership or exemplary character; military and civilian education; awards and decorations; experience and achievements; leadership qualities and character. **Only one Air and one Army submission per state.**

Nomination and Selection Procedures

Recommended endorsements from unit commander, battalion or wing commander and state Adjutant General. An individual may not receive more than one award. More than one award may be given in a calendar year. Each state or territory may submit no more than one ANG and one ARNG nomination each year.

Eagle Rising Award for Warrant Officers

Purpose

This award was established to annually recognize the achievements and dedicated service of Army National Guard Warrant Officers (CWO 1-3) who have **demonstrated outstanding leadership, technical skills, and professionalism in their services to country and community**. This is the latest addition to the NGAUS Awards Program. The award was first presented in 2011.

Eligibility

Nominees must be Warrant Officers serving in the Army National Guard during the award period for which the award is given. **Nominees must be members of both NGAUS and their state associations.**

Criteria

Whole-career information will be submitted and evaluated to include: accomplishments in duty assignments; career progression, training, and professional development activities; community service demonstrating leadership or exemplary character; military and civilian education; awards and decorations; experience and achievements; leadership qualities and character.

Nomination and Selection Procedures

Recommended endorsements from unit commander, battalion, group, or brigade commander and state Adjutant General. An individual may not receive more than one award. More than one award may be given in a calendar year. **Each state or territory may submit no more than one nomination each year.**

Individual Award Nomination Form

Point of Contact: awards@ngaus.org

Nomination Deadline: Feb. 15

Award Nominated to Receive: _____

Nominated By: _____

Name/Rank/Duty/Title/ Organization or Unit of Assignment of Nominee:

_____

Years in the National Guard: _____

Justification for Award:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Proposed Citation:

_____

_____

_____

_____