



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Department of Defense Awards Snell & Wilmer the 2015 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award** *Law Firm Earns Nation's Highest Honor for Supporting Guard and Reserve Employees*

**WASHINGTON** – Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), a Department of Defense office, announced today that Snell & Wilmer has been awarded the 2015 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award.

The law firm, based in Phoenix, Ariz., was one of 15 employers from across the nation to receive the prestigious award. The Freedom Award is the Nation's highest honor given to employers for exceptional support of Guard and Reserve employees.

"These outstanding employers have not only earned this award, they have earned this Nation's gratitude," said Defense Secretary Ash Carter. "I am truly honored to recognize these 15 organizations for their unwavering support of our military men and women and their families. Their accomplishments are a vital piece of our National defense and a high standard toward which all employers of Guard and Reserve members should strive."

Snell & Wilmer earned the award for a number of reasons, including:

- Snell & Wilmer provides pro bono legal services to Guard members, Reserve members and veterans during annual events as well as to military personnel on a day-to-day basis if income qualified.
- The first Veterans Court was implemented a few years ago with the direct help from several Snell & Wilmer attorneys. This has since grown to multiple courts throughout the state.
- Snell & Wilmer has a military pay differential policy, which in most cases costs the firm more than \$50,000 per attorney while on deployments.
- The firm has more than 30 members of its staff who serve in the Guard and Reserve or are veterans. Snell & Wilmer views military service as a resume-enhancer and as a major factor in favor of hiring new attorneys.
- Snell & Wilmer provides sponsorship, scholarships, financial support and donations to several Veterans Service Organizations, exceeding \$23,000 over the past two years, exclusive of pro bono legal services.

Snell & Wilmer was nominated by United States Army Reservist Col. [Craig Denney](#), counsel in the Reno office, and Marine Corps Reservist Col. [Richard Erickson](#), partner in the Phoenix office. Erickson stated, "I nominated my firm for the Freedom Award because of its genuine and unconditional support of my military service over many years. The firm's support extended to opportunities and advancement in the Marine Corps Reserve and to peace of mind with my family at home."

The 2015 Freedom Award recipients were selected from 2,960 nominations received from Guardsmen and Reservists for going far beyond what the federal law requires to support their military employees. The recipients are named below:

<b>Employer</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Nominator's Branch of Service</b>
Black Hills Corporation	Rapid City, SD	Army National Guard
Boise Fire Department	Boise, ID	Marine Corps Reserve
BP America, Inc.	Houston, TX	Army National Guard
Cardinal Health	Dublin, Ohio	Army National Guard
Cigna	Bloomfield, CT	Air National Guard
City of Glendale	Glendale, AZ	Navy Reserve
City of Shawnee	Shawnee, KS	Army Reserve
College of the Ozarks	Point Lookout ,MO	Army National Guard
CVS Health	Woonsocket, RI	Air National Guard
Devon Energy	Oklahoma City, OK	Air National Guard
Dr. Joe A. Jackson, MD, PLLC	Biloxi, MS	Army National Guard
Neil, Dymott, Frank, McFall, Trexler, McCabe & Hudson APLC	San Diego, CA	Navy Reserve
Snell & Wilmer	Phoenix, AZ	Marine Corps Reserve
Town of Hingham, MA	Hingham, MA	Navy Reserve
Walt Disney Co.	Burbank, CA	Air National Guard

The Freedom Award was instituted in 1996. These outstanding employers join an elite group of 205 previous recipients of the award.

For more information about the Freedom Award and this year's recipients, visit [www.FreedomAward.mil](http://www.FreedomAward.mil).

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