

In Review: 2017 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Awards

By CSI Aviation
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Earlier this year, CSI Aviation was honored to receive the 2017 [Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award](#). The Freedom Award is the highest honor given by the Department of Defense to civilian employers for their support of National Guard and Reserve employees. CSI was one of 3,000 nominees and one of only 15 recipients.

The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award ceremony took place on August 25, 2017 at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. with representatives from each of the 15 winning companies, Department of Defense personnel, members of the National Guard and Reserve and their families, master of ceremonies and news anchor, Jonathan Elias, singer and actress, Marie Osmond, and keynote speaker, Deputy Secretary of Defense, Patrick Shanahan in attendance.

In order to be considered for this prestigious honor, organizations are required to demonstrate exceptional support for their employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve through leadership and company practices, including the implementation of personnel policies that make juggling service and civilian work possible.

“Three thousand nominations were submitted. Fifteen exceptional organizations are being recognized today – they simply represent the best of the best,” said Shanahan. “You come in all shapes and sizes, from 40 to 150,000; from Georgia to Arizona, Wyoming to Massachusetts, and from services to products.”

After a performance of the national anthem by military performing group, 4TROOPS, and remarks by Elias, Osmond and Shanahan, a representative from each winning company was brought to stage to accept the award. CSI Aviation CEO, Colonel Allen Weh, accepted the award on the company’s behalf.

Of the company, Elias said, “CSI Aviation takes pride in recognizing their military members for their stellar service during deployments and training missions through military awards ceremonies and public press releases, letting everyone know what’s going on. The company also offers a scholarship program for dependents of full time employees who meet the criteria.”

The ceremony concluded with a roaring round of applause as each leader from the winning companies stood on the stage for a group photo, followed by a parting performance by 4TROOPS.

Being surrounded by other leaders who recognize the value of their enlisted employees was a great honor for CSI and the words of Deputy Secretary Shanahan’s keynote speech will not be long forgotten.

“Here in the Pentagon we say leadership casts a long shadow. Your shadow is long,” he said. “Your employees see it. The communities you operate in see it, and it manifests itself at this level as the will of the nation.”





The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award Ceremony can be viewed in its entirety at <https://www.dvidshub.net/video/545871/secretary-defense-employer-support-freedom-award>.