

## **U.S. servicemen and servicewomen honored at GEICO's 2015 Military Service Awards**

**Tuesday, April 26, 2016 12:00:00 PM (GMT)**

GEICO honored six members of the military yesterday with the 2015 GEICO Military Service Awards for their outstanding service to their military and civilian communities.

For 28 consecutive years, the GEICO Military Service Awards has recognized distinguished members of the U.S. military for their noteworthy contributions to the public good. Each award recipient has made a significant impact in their communities by volunteering their time and talents to address important safety and health issues.

GEICO chairman Tony Nicely presented the six recipients with the GEICO Military Service Awards at a special ceremony yesterday in Washington, D.C. "Since opening our doors in 1936, GEICO has been dedicated to supporting the men and women serving our country," said Nicely. "The GEICO Military Service Awards was created to give special recognition to servicemen and servicewomen who go above and beyond the call of duty to improve their communities. We are proud to continue this tradition."

The 2015 GEICO Military Service Award recipients are:

### **United States Army**

Sgt. Ryan M. Beitler, who currently serves as a traffic accident investigator for the 42<sup>nd</sup> Military Police Detachment, 503<sup>rd</sup> Military Police Battalion (Airborne), 16<sup>th</sup> Military Police Brigade in Fort Bragg, N.C., was recognized for his work in traffic safety and accident prevention. Sgt. Beitler has helped serve the Fort Bragg Military and Civilian community by implementing initiatives to protect children, deter traffic violations, prevent DUIs, and improve driver safety.

He improved the Supplemental Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) with his school bus safety initiative. Through this program, bus stop violators were recorded and documented on camera, resulting in a 93 percent decrease in violations and the improved safety of school children.

### **United States Marines**

Gunnery Sgt. Kwan S. Cochrane, currently serving as the Ground Safety Manager for Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 501 aboard Marine Corps Station Beaufort, South Carolina, was cited for his work in traffic safety and accident prevention.

He assisted in the revitalization of Marine Aircraft Group 31's ground safety program by implementing an active fall protection program. This program improved the safety of Marine maintainers who routinely encounter extreme hazards. Gunnery Sgt. Cochrane's safety initiative serves as a model for fall protection strategies within the Marine Corps and the Joint Strike Fighter program.

### **United States Navy**

Petty Officer Ian M. Graves, assigned to Communications Wing ONE, Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., earned recognition for his work in drug and alcohol abuse prevention. He also serves as the operations director, camp director, and mentor for the Drug Education for Youth Program (DEFY). Since accepting this position, he has made a significant investment in the future of the youth graduates.

In addition, he devoted more than 479 off-duty hours to lead trainings designed to teach military dependent youths about drug and alcohol awareness and prevention, conflict resolution, gang resistance, and self-esteem, among other important issues.

While serving in Rota, Spain, Petty Officer Graves volunteered 172 hours at a local thrift shop. He has also helped Oklahoma City Project Hugs pack and ship over 2,000 care packages for service members around the world each holiday season.

### **United States Air Force**

Master Sgt. Michael D. Champion, currently assigned as a Technical Training Instructor for the 312<sup>th</sup> Training Squadron, Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas, was recognized for his work in fire safety and fire prevention. Master Sgt. Champion has led over 420 inspections, fixed more than 870 fire hazards, and reduced hazards by 92 percent. He also created 10 "Train the Trainer" programs to ensure the safety of frontline warfighters.

Master Sgt. Champion headed the development of health and safety initiatives that played a key role in the selection of Goodfellow Air Force Base as the Department of Defense (DOD) "Best Small Fire Department of the Year." Also, in his off-duty time he is a volunteer firefighter in his local community.

### **United States Coast Guard**

Petty Officer Trent J. Lamun, assigned to the Health, Safety, and Work-Life Service Center in Norfolk, Va., was honored for his work in fire safety and fire prevention. He developed a confined space entry and rescue drill, which was approved by the Office of Cutter Forces.

While working with the Surface Force Logistics Center, he discovered a flaw in the water mist fire-fighting systems of the USCG Cutters that placed Coast Guardsmen at risk of personal injury or death.

Petty Officer Lamun served as a principle member of Cutter specific Main Space Fire Doctrine Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP) concerning the awareness of lead and asbestos hazards. He also played a vital role in the development of Shipboard Fire Protection and Fire Marshall TTP.

### **National Guard/Reserves**

U.S. Air National Guard Master Sgt. Joi A. Pearson, who served as Superintendent of Officer Promotion Board Eligibility for the Headquarters Air Reserve Personnel Center, Buckley Air Force Base, Colo., was recognized for her work in drug and alcohol abuse prevention. As a certified victim advocate, she has responded to many victim calls and handled each one with the support, safety and security of the victim as top priority.

Master Sgt. Pearson has conducted multiple sexual assault prevention and response briefings, managed a unit Wingman Day event, lead over 100 DWI, relapse prevention and anger management classes, and facilitated two enlisted force structured forums with more than 130 Airmen.

In addition, she has devoted time to the local homeless, served as a Colorado Youth Mentor in support of 12 at-risk families, and offered more than 30 hours of service to Team Buckley Airmen Against Drunk Driving.

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