

Dept. of Military Affairs: Wisconsin Air Guard inducts retired general officer to Hall of Fame

Posted on Wednesday, Dec 6, 2023

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Retired Brig. Gen. Gary Ebben, who concluded his 38-year military career serving as interim adjutant general of Wisconsin while simultaneously serving as Wisconsin's deputy adjutant general for Air, was inducted into the Wisconsin Air National Guard's Hall of Fame during a Dec. 1 ceremony at Joint Force Headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin.

Ebben is the 70th inductee to the Wisconsin Air National Guard Hall of Fame, which was established in 1982 to honor the special contributions Air National Guard members have made to the overall success of the Wisconsin National Guard mission.

Brig. Gen. David May, who followed Ebben as Wisconsin's deputy adjutant general for Air, said it was a distinct honor to induct a friend and mentor.

"Today we add another giant to that beloved wall," May said, referring to the display of plaques honoring prior Hall of Fame inductees. "It has occurred to me numerous times after Brig. Gen. Ebben retired that the established strength of our organization is what enabled us to thrive over the past few years."

May observed that the Wisconsin Air National Guard served in unprecedented fashion during the COVID pandemic and also in response to civil unrest, to include performing a security mission in the nation's capitol in January 2021.

"You can't grow organizational capacity in the moment of need — it must already exist," May said. "And in my opinion, it existed in large part due to Brig. Gen.

Ebben's steady and sustained leadership in key positions over the years."

May also credited Ebben's perseverance and concern for the welfare of his Airmen with Volk Field's survival during base cutbacks in 2011 and 2012, when Ebben was the base commander.

Ebben thanked many people during the ceremony, including retired Maj. Gen. Fred Sloan and retired Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening — both of whom preceded Ebben as deputy adjutant general for Air. He also thanked his wife Tina for her support throughout his career.

Ebben cited a contemporary proverb that is displayed on a wall at his home.

"This is the beginning of a new day," he read. "When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever. In its place is something that you have left behind. Let it be something good."

The part of that proverb that sticks out, Ebben said, has to do with the importance of what is done today, "because you were exchanging a day of your life for it.

"For many people, your job is a means to an end — it's a way to provide for yourself, provide for your family," he continued. "I was so blessed that it was much more than that because I got to serve with just amazing Airmen, Soldiers, people that just did incredible things."