

UW-Stout: Honored for strong support of employees in National Guard and Reserve

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Tech. Sgt. Nelson nominates Infrastructure Services Deputy CIO Janicki with Patriot Award

Menomonie, Wis. – University of Wisconsin-Stout, Wisconsin's Polytechnic University, and its Learning and Information Technology (LIT) department received the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Certificate of Appreciation on March 17. ESGR is a Department of Defense program that fosters strong relationships between civilian employers and their National Guard and Reserve employees.

Presenting UW-Stout and LIT with the ESGR Certificate of Appreciation were United States Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Nelson, System Engineer III with UW-Stout's Infrastructure Services, as well as Wisconsin ESGR Area 6 Chair Mike Hallquist and ESGR volunteer Martha Stratton.

Accepting the recognition on behalf of the university and LIT were Nelson's supervisors, Assistant Chancellor of LIT and Chief Information Officer Sue Traxler and Deputy Chief Information Officer and Director of Infrastructure Services Tom Janicki. They were joined by Chancellor Katherine Frank. Janicki also received the organization's Patriot Award.

"I'd like to thank Tom, Sue, the Chancellor, and everyone at UW-Stout for the incredible support they've shown me throughout my Air Force Reserve career," Nelson said. "I nominated Tom for the Patriot Award because he consistently demonstrates understanding, flexibility, and encouragement for my military

obligations, ensuring I never feel conflicted between my responsibilities here and my service to our country.”

Janicki is honored by the recognition, but feels the real credit belongs to UW-Stout. “Our policies and culture empower supervisors to support Guard and Reserve members effectively, making service and work responsibilities easier to balance,” he said.

Within its Statement of Support from the Guard and Reserve, UW-Stout affirms, “We recognize the Guard and Reserve are essential to the strength of our Nation and the well-being of our communities.

“Therefore, we join other employers in pledging that:

- We fully recognize, honor and comply with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).
- We will provide our managers and supervisors with the tools they need to effectively manage those employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.
- We appreciate the values, leadership and unique skills Service members bring to the workforce and will encourage opportunities to employ Guardsmen, Reservists, transitioning Service members and Veterans.
- We will continually recognize and support our country’s Service members and their families in peace, in crisis, and in war.”

The Patriot Award is given to patriotic employers for contributing to national security and protecting liberty and freedom by supporting employee participation in America’s National Guard and Reserve Force.

UW-Stout has also been recognized for its support of veteran and active service students. The university was named a 2025 Best for Vets College by Military Times for its commitment to serving veterans and their families, ranking first in Wisconsin among traditional and online universities and placing 24th in the Midwest.

Last spring, the university received a silver designation as a Military Friendly® School because of its efforts to create sustainable and meaningful education paths for members of the military community. It was the 16th consecutive year that UW-Stout earned a place on that list.

“At UW-Stout, we are proud to support veteran and active service students and

employees across the university. Recognition from organizations like ESGR and others is important confirmation that we are succeeding as a university in support of our students, faculty, and staff. The fact that an employee nominated their supervisor for this recognition makes the award even more special, and we are 'Stout Proud' of the example set by Tom Janicki and LIT," Chancellor Frank said.

UW-Stout Veteran Services can provide advice on veteran and military education benefits and assists with applying for benefits. It can be reached by calling 715-232-1659 or emailing veteranstudents@uwstout.edu.

The university's most recent First Destination Report, released earlier this month, stated that 100% of veteran graduates were employed within six months of graduation.

UW-Stout, a member of the Universities of Wisconsin, is Wisconsin's Polytechnic University, with a focus on applied learning, collaboration with business and industry, and career outcomes. Learn more via the FOCUS2030 strategic plan.