

South Dakota National Guard

Public Affairs Office

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 7, 2016

Rapid City Guard member receives Seven Seals Award

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Leadership and volunteers with the South Dakota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve recognized a South Dakota Army National Guard member for his years of service with a presentation of the Seven Seals Award at Camp Rapid, April 7.

The Seven Seals Award, which recognizes significant achievement, initiative, or support that promotes and supports the ESGR mission, was presented to Sgt. 1st Class Don Matthews, the SDARNG's visual information manager.

“We wanted to recognize Don for all of the things he’s done for ESGR over the years,” retired Brig. Gen. Ronald Mielke, SD ESGR state chair, said during the presentation. “He’s always been there for us, supported us, and he’s been a great advocate for the SD ESGR.”

Matthews, who formerly served in the volunteer role of public affairs director for SD ESGR, will retire from the SDARNG at the end of April after more than 30 years of military service.

“In the last 10 years, the SD ESGR has only presented 14 Seven Seals Awards,” Mielke said, after reading a list of contributions Matthews has made from providing photography and video support to visual information products such as banners and pamphlets. “We certainly felt that Don was deserving of this award.”

Additionally, Mielke, a former assistant adjutant general in the SD Air National Guard, presented Matthews with a coin, a longstanding military tradition that shows appreciation and recognizes significant accomplishments.

Past Seven Seals Award recipients include:

- 2007 Earl Schultz, Department of Labor and Lt. Cmdr. Chris Rossing, U.S. Navy Reserve
- 2008 Maj. Gen. Michael Gorman, SDARNG
- 2009 Col. Tracy Settle, SDARNG; Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Bekaert, SDARNG; and Brig. Gen. Keith Corbett, SDARNG
- 2010 Col. Marshall Michaels, SDARNG
- 2011 S.D. School of Mines & Technology and River City Transit, Pierre
- 2013 Brig. Gen. Wayne Shanks, SDANG
- 2014 Brig. Gen. Ted Johnson, SDARNG and Lt. Col. Reid Christopherson, SDANG
- 2015 Western Dakota Tech., Rapid City

High resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard



160407-Z-FO377-009: U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Don Matthews, South Dakota Army National Guard, is presented the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Seven Seals Award, from retired Brig. Gen. Ronald Mielke, SD ESGR state chair, at Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., April 7, 2016. The award recognizes significant achievement, initiative, or support that promotes and supports the ESGR mission. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Chad Carlson/Released)

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