

# South Dakota National Guard

## Public Affairs Office

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## SD National Guard Substance Abuse Program receives Secretary of Defense Community Drug Awareness Award

RAPID CITY, S.D. – The South Dakota Army National Guard Substance Abuse Program received the Secretary of Defense Community Drug Awareness Award at the Pentagon’s Hall of Heroes, in Arlington, Va., Oct. 18.

The award, established in 1990 in an effort to promote community drug awareness efforts in the DoD community, is presented annually to the best drug demand reduction program for the previous fiscal year within each service, the National Guard, the defense agencies and field activities.

While the SDARNG SAP target audience is military service members, it has expanded to a diverse population of youth and adults throughout the state through its involvement with military families, military youth and community coalitions.

Program staff is involved with all youth K-12 in Character Counts initiatives, Students Against Destructive Decisions and Red Ribbon Week activities.

Support is provided to adults through town hall events and coalition partnerships. Engaging with the elderly occurs during Prescription Drug Take Back events in communities across South Dakota.

“Receiving this award is significant to the South Dakota Army National Guard Substance Abuse Program because it shows how important it is that to truly combat the substance issues in your area it takes a community,” said Kristi Palmer, alcohol and drug control officer with the SDARNG’s SAP. “This award shows the collaboration with various community coalitions and community-based organizations is what it takes to create environmental change in the area of substance abuse.”

Award criteria included: maximizing the use of department demand reduction resources to effectively reach the targeted audience; participation in Red Ribbon Week observances; and program impact and achievements.

“It’s clear this program has implemented many activities that help keep our Soldiers and young children drug and alcohol free,” Palmer said. “Although awards give some meaning for our efforts with the Soldiers and youth, the lasting award comes from the smile on the faces of the youth, showing a Soldier that what they do has made a difference.”

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High resolution photos are available at [www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard](http://www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard).



**181018-Z-ZZ999-0001:** The South Dakota Army National Guard Substance Abuse Program receives the Secretary of Defense Community Drug Awareness Award in the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes, in Arlington, Va., Oct. 18, 2018. Pictured left to right is Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, South Dakota National Guard's adjutant general, and Sgt. Shaun Kuharski, Kristi Palmer and Paul Brosz, SDARNG Substance Abuse Program employees. (Courtesy photo)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,** please contact the SDNG Public Affairs Office at (605) 737-6721 or e-mail [ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil](mailto:ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil).