

South Dakota National Guard

Public Affairs Office

Phone: 605-737-6721 Email: ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil Web: sd.ng.mil



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SD Army National Guard battalion receives national award

BROOKINGS, S.D. – For the second year in a row, the South Dakota National Guard’s 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion has received the Gen. Walter T. Kerwin, Jr. Readiness Award for excellence.

The Brookings-based 152nd was announced as the recipient of the Kerwin award for 2020, which recognizes the most outstanding Army National Guard battalion in the nation for achieving the highest standards in training and readiness.

The national award is presented jointly on behalf of the National Guard Association of the United States, the Association of the U.S. Army, and the Reserve Officers Association. This is the third time in four years the 152nd has received this award, and it is the fourth straight year a SDNG battalion has won the award.

“I am proud and honored to receive the Kerwin award on behalf of the soldiers of the 152nd CSSB,” said Lt. Col. Jason Kleinschmit, 152nd commander. “Their heart and dedication to maintain a constant state of readiness to serve our state and country is what makes them the nation’s best.”

The 152nd CSSB provides multifunctional logistics and support operations for U.S. forces, as well as provides command and control, administrative, logistics and training support for nearly 600 soldiers in four assigned units and detachments located in six communities throughout South Dakota. The Kerwin award also reflects the state of readiness of the battalion’s subordinate companies, which include the 1742nd Transportation Company (Sioux Falls, Flandreau), 740th Transportation Company (Milbank, Aberdeen), 665th Support Maintenance Company (Mitchell), and 730th Area Support Medical Company (Vermillion).

Recipients of the Kerwin award demonstrate excellence in operational planning, execution of training and maintaining high readiness standards above all other Army National Guard units for the training year. Evaluation criteria for the award include the areas of assigned personnel strength, percentage of personnel qualified in their duty position, attendance at monthly drill weekends and annual training, individual weapons qualification and physical fitness test scores, as well as an effective maintenance program.

The Kerwin award was named for retired Gen. Walter T. Kerwin, Jr., who served as the first commander of United States Forces Command and also as Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army from 1974 to 1978. Kerwin was a strong advocate of the “One Army,” or “Total Army” concept that recognized the important role of the National Guard and U. S. Army Reserve. The plans and programs he set in motion resulted in a significant improvement in the readiness of reserve components.

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211012-Z-A3566-0001: The South Dakota Army National Guard’s 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Jason Kleinschmidt, center left, and Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Schmidt, center right, accept the Gen. Walter T. Kerwin, Jr. Readiness Award presented at the Association of the U.S. Army Annual Conference in Washington D.C., Oct. 13, 2021. Also pictured from left: Retired Maj. Gen. Ray Carpenter, former acting director of the National Guard Bureau and SDARNG assistant adjutant general, Gen. Michael Garrett, commanding general of Army Forces Command, and Brig. Gen. Michael Oster, SDARNG assistant adjutant general.

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