

Air Guard Enlisted Honorees Visit NGAUS, Tour Museum

Six of the Air National Guard's best enlisted members visited NGAUS on June 8, and were given a tour of the National Guard Museum and the Medal of Honor Gallery. The group was in Washington, D.C., as part of their reward for earning top honors in the Air Guard.

Visiting NGAUS were Staff Sgt. Jonathan K. Sawmiller, 124th Civil Engineering Squadron, Idaho Air National Guard, Airman of the Year; Tech. Sgt. Robert L. Woods, 123rd Civil Engineering Squadron, Kentucky Air National Guard, Noncommissioned Officer of the Year; Master Sgt. Tyrone F. Bingham, 170th Group, Nebraska Air National Guard, Senior NCO of the Year; Master Sgt. Lorene D. Kitzmiller, 118th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, Tennessee Air National Guard, First Sergeant of the Year; Senior Master Sgt. Joseph E. Onesto, 121st Services Flight, Ohio Air National Guard, Base Honor Guard Manager of the Year; and Sr. Airman Terrence I. Mananes, 163rd Logistics Squadron, California Air National Guard, Base Honor Guard Member of the Year.

After a tour of the museum by Zayna Bizri, the National Guard Educational Foundation intern, Onesto said, "It's really fantastic. There's so much history."

Like many people, he had no idea the museum was in the National Guard Memorial, but said he plans to let others know about it and urge them to visit.

"You just don't understand how much the Guard has been involved (in American history)," he said.

Besides NGAUS, the award winners visited the Pentagon, Arlington National Cemetery and the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, among other highlights. They met Lt. Gen. Harry Wyatt III, the Air Guard director, and were honored guests at a reception hosted by Gen. Craig R. McKinley, chief of the National Guard Bureau.

They will now compete with their Air Force active duty and Reserve counterparts for the Air Force's top 12 Outstanding Airmen recognition.