

# THE VOICE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON  
AUGUST 2023

## NEW PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

*Written by President Dan Wessman*

I am pleased to write this note to you officially introducing myself as your new National Guard Association of Washington President.

I joined the NGAW in 2012 and became a member of the board in 2019. Since then, I have come to realize that there is a lot of work we can do to improve the benefits for our Guard Family. Here are a couple of the legislative initiatives we are currently working:

- Zero Cost Tricare (Federal). We're working with NGAUS to get zero cost Tricare for ALL Guardsmen.
- Childcare (State and Federal). We are working with NGB as well as state legislators to offer affordable childcare during drill weekends and annual training.
- Employer Tax Credit (State). We're working to increase the employer incentive for hiring Guard members.

Additionally, we are working on our direct support to the Guard members and their families through:

- Foundation capital for Scholarships, Professional Development, & Emergency Relief. Over the past two years we awarded 17 scholarships totaling \$11,500. We are trying to double that amount for 2024.
- Regional outreach / Association chapters. This is a new initiative aimed to increase awareness and support to our personnel outside of Camp Murray.
- Targeted corporate partnerships. In addition to fundraising, we are looking for corporate partners to give back to our guard members through things like employment or education.

We have an incredibly talented and highly engaged team in place at NGAW right now that is ready and willing to take on the challenges you present to us. Please let us know if there is something you think we need to address.



# Amplify the Voice of Every Guardsman

AUGUST 2023

## 2023 STATE CONFERENCE RECAP

The 2023 NGAW State Conference was held on Saturday May 13. We kicked off the conference with a breakfast reception in the Secretary of State's office and a tour of the beautiful Capitol Building. We then shifted to the Olympia Hotel at Capitol Lake to learn what the Board has worked on for the last year and to hear from state leadership about the future of the WA Guard. We shared the names of our 2023 NGAW Scholarship recipients and announced the results of the Board election.



Our keynote speaker, Amanda Achong from Boeing, was truly inspirational! She addressed the challenges of hanging up the uniform, becoming a civilian employee, and finding an organization with a mission bigger than yourself. Her suggestion: find an organization that matches your values and invests in you. You, the Soldiers and Airmen of the Washington National Guard, are our greatest resource!

We also had fantastic presentations from the WA Secretary of State, the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs, the Washington Student Achievement Council, EANGUS, and NGAUS. During breaks, attendees were able to network with fellow Guard members and some of our key corporate sponsors, including USAA, BLR, Collins Aerospace, MAK Technologies, and more.

Awards were given to Magaly Sosa and Angela Spitzer in recognition of their volunteerism, and we recognized Secretary of State (and WA Guardsman) Steve Hobbs with the Warren G. Magnuson Legislator of the Year Award.

The conference was a big success, and we received a lot of positive feedback from attendees and state leadership. We're already looking ahead to next year's conference--let us know if you have ideas for speakers or discussion topics!



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## 2023 BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

Congratulations to our newly elected Board members! For the 2023-25 term, your NGAW Board will be:

President - Dan Wessman  
Vice President - Fernando Garcia  
Secretary - Laura Dutton  
Treasurer - Amy Patterson  
Development Director - Steve Vuleta  
Membership Director - Courtney Lawson



New Board members accepting the Oath of Office

## QUARTERLY NGAW MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Meeting Date: 20 July 2023

Call to Order at 1138

Members Present: Wessman, Garcia, Vuleta, Dutton, Patterson (Teams)

Employees Present: Golonka, Sweeney, M. Wessman

Last Meeting Recap: introduction to the new board and new positions

Quarterly Reports

Next Quarter Calendar

- EANGUS Annual Conference: 5 currently registered, goal: 10. Do we want to grant \$500 from the Foundation (donated by Geico) to support conference attendance, in accordance with our core values?  
Board Vote: 5 yes, 0 no. Vote passes.
- NGAUS Annual Conference: 17 currently registered, goal: 20
- Golf Scramble: Sept 15, 9am shotgun start  
Need volunteers, sponsors, & raffle items
- Next Board Meeting: Thurs 19 October 2023

Proposals for Board Review

- Requests for Charitable Support: JSS request funds for Holiday Magic, expected support for 400 families.  
Board Vote: 5 for yes, 0 for no. Vote passes.

For the full July 2024 Meeting Minutes, visit: <https://ngaw.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2023/08/2023-July-Meeting-Min.pdf>



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## 2023 SCHOLARSHIPS

With the help of our amazing and generous corporate partner USAA, the NGAW Foundation fulfilled its mission yet again this year by awarding \$5000 in scholarships to our members and their dependents! All current paid and lifetime members of NGAW are eligible for our scholarships, as are their dependents. This includes Officers, Enlisted, and Retirees.

*Congratulations 2023 Scholarship Recipients*



<b>Melissa Swain</b>	<b>\$1000 NGAW /USAA Scholarship (Army)</b>
<b>Robert Heiking</b>	<b>\$500 NGAW /USAA Scholarship (Air)</b>
<b>Nolan Rinehart</b>	<b>\$500 NGAW Foundation Scholarship</b>
<b>Charlotte Binkoski</b>	<b>\$500 NGAW Foundation Scholarship</b>
<b>Andrew Apple</b>	<b>\$500 NGAW Foundation Scholarship</b>
<b>Emily Duncan</b>	<b>\$1000 NGAW Dependent Award</b>
<b>Vanessa Ponce</b>	<b>\$1000 NGAW Dependent Award</b>



Check out the Scholarships page of our website for 2024 application details, as well as links to a variety of other scholarships offered by EANGUS, NGAUS, Folds of Honor, AUSA, and the National Guard Educational Foundation: <https://ngaw.org/scholarships/>.



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## UPCOMING NATIONAL CONFERENCES

The EANGUS and NGAUS annual conferences are THIS MONTH! The EANGUS Conference will be Aug 13-16 in Rochester, MN, and the NGAUS Conference will be Aug 18-21 in Reno, NV. NGAW is really looking forward to these important events! These conferences provide valuable professional development opportunities, especially for our junior members.



These conferences bring together all 50 states, DC, and the 3 territories to set a unified legislative agenda. They allow participants to get involved at the national level, network, learn, and see how the WA Guard fits into the greater Guard system. Both events are open to current Guardsmen and retirees and include social events for guests and spouses. **Interested in attending?** Contact our office today!

## 2023 FALL GOLF SCRAMBLE

Fore! The 2023 NGAW Fall Golf Scramble is hitting the links on **Fri. Sept. 15** at **Eagles Pride Golf Course** in DuPont. Shotgun start at 9am. Watch our website and social media for updates. Will you be one of the lucky few to take home one of the coveted trophies for top (and bottom) teams, longest drive, or closest to the pin? Registration is open, so sign up today! Register at: <https://ngaw.org/2023-fall-golf-registration/>



Are you interested in helping at the tournament? Contact our office about volunteering. Would you or your organization like to sponsor a hole or donate to our raffle? Fill out the Sponsor Registration form here: <https://ngaw.org/2023-fall-golf-sponsorship/>.

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## DO YOU HAVE A LIFETIME MEMEBRSHIP?

Is remembering to renew your NGAW membership each year a struggle? Do you wish there was a set-it-and-forget-it option? There is! NGAW has affordable lifetime membership options for both Enlisted and Officers.

These memberships are offered to both those currently serving in the WA National Guard, as well as retirees, and installment payment options are available. For more information contact [ngaw@ngaw.org](mailto:ngaw@ngaw.org) or visit: [ngaw.org/membership-account/membershiplevels/](http://ngaw.org/membership-account/membershiplevels/).

### Lifetime Member Benefits Include:

- Dedicated advocates in Olympia and on Capitol Hill fighting for your benefits
- Access to exclusive professional development, networking and educational opportunities
- Eligibility for member and dependent scholarships
- Insurance supplements designed for members of the National Guard
- The opportunity to serve on association committees and task forces that help drive the future of Guard advocacy
- A super cool commemorative NGAW insulated mug!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug 13-16 EANGUS Conference

Aug 18-21 NGAUS Conference

**Sep 15 Golf Scramble**

Sep 17-19 Capitol Summit

**Nov 8 Industry Day**



## CONNECT WITH US!



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## WE NEED YOUR CIVILIAN EMAIL ADDRESS!

Help us connect better with you. Please update your membership account with a **civilian email address** so that you can better view our messages.

## THANK YOU SPONSORS

