

THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

501 C (19), VETERAN'S ORGANIZATION

PO BOX 266

WRIGHTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY 08562

NGANJ.ORG

president@nganj.org



8 March 2025

NGANJ PRESIDENTS REPORT

To the Members,

Welcome to Long Branch, a famous location for surf, sun, shore fun and the birthplace of famous Rock and Country Singers, Tik Tok Stars, Poets, & Historians!

It is with deepest appreciation that I acknowledge Brigadier General Yvonne L. Mays, the newest Adjutant General and Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veteran's Affairs. A trailblazer in her own right, General Mays makes history as the first African American woman and the third Air Force Officer to lead the New Jersey National Guard since its inception in 1668. Her unwavering dedication, along with that of her exceptional DMAVA leadership team, is truly the backbone of our service members' success. Their tireless efforts and unwavering advocacy were instrumental in making the Third Annual Joint Conference and Exhibition a reality. We are sincerely grateful for their service and commitment.

Thank you to the National Guard Association of New Jersey leadership team, both officer and enlisted; both elected and voluntold. It has been an extremely busy year, addressing association business at every opportunity. Without them, this weekend would never have become reality. Sincere thank you to the NJNG Retired General Officers, who continue to reach back and support agendas in the best interest of our soldiers and airmen.

I want to extend a warm, Welcome Home! to the 44th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and the countless 108WING and 177FW Airman who deployed on multiple occasions throughout my tenure.

Special thank you to the members who are here out of a sense of duty, a sense of professionalism and who are striving to make the NJ National Guard the best it can be! We on the executive council feel the same and applaud you for making this commitment.

We are a profession of arms. As such, we have a professional obligation to be a member of our professional organizations! While there are many associations, like the NRA, PBA, VFW, MOAA, AUSA, AFA, DVA, remember, each association is created to benefit their members. The National Guard Association of NJ, the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of NJ., the National Guard Association of the U.S., the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the

U.S., and the Doughboy Chapter of the USA Warrant Officers Association are the only associations which solely support the interests of the National Guard. With an armory in almost every congressional district, we are often the face of the military. Our organizations are the most respected and known bi-partisan associations on Capitol Hill.

Know that your association leadership has done an outstanding job for the Guard this year. Our last conference in Atlantic City was a huge success. Attendance at the 146th NGAUS General Conference and Exhibition in Detroit Michigan was nothing short of spectacular, where about 4,425 people were registered to attend. The last time a NGAUS Conference reached this number of attendees was the association's 140th in 2018. Be sure to pay your dues, commit to supporting the NGANJ, and mark your calendars now for the 147th in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in August 2025.

The National Guard Association of NJ has an added benefit, that of continuing to provide mentorship, professional development, opportunities for networking, and actual in person social outlets with those who share your profession.

We are pledging to reinvigorate our legislative engagement with state and federal lawmakers by which we build and keep hard won benefits. The Guard has always been there for America, and we all want to do our part to preserve freedom and this great experiment called the United States of America.

Much like our active counterparts, we don't want to lose the hard-earned benefits that we have obtained. The best way to ensure that we keep the tools and resources needed for training and the benefits needed to ensure that we remain an economical, well trained, professional and relevant force who recruits the best and the brightest, is to ensure *full* membership in our associations.

The challenges we face as a nation are constantly evolving. Just as the National Guard remains an indispensable force in meeting those challenges head-on, so too will you, but only if we continue to show our political clout. Your elected officers and representatives work for your benefit and we need you to remain involved, continue your membership, communicate with Congress and above all, support your association.

In closing, if you are not already an Association Member, we hope you plan to become a dues paying member! Please enjoy tonight's Dinner Reception, Associations Dinner & Awards presentation, followed by the Yacht Rock Theme (boat attire) hospitality suite!!

Thank you!

LOLA D. WASHINGTON
Col, NJANG
President, NGANJ