

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Virgin Islands Employer Support Of the Guard And Reserve Hosts 'Briefings With The Boss'

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ST. CROIX -- Virgin Islands Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (V.I.E.S.G.R.) hosted three "Briefings with the Boss" in the territory in March, according to press release V.I.E.S.G.R. issued this afternoon. At the events, employers are given the opportunity to learn more about what their service member employees do for the military and the legal requirements that employers of Guard and Reserve service members must fulfill.

The briefings were held March 11, on St. Croix, March 16, on St. Thomas and March 18, on St. John. Attendees at all the briefings included military representatives, private sector employers and local and federal government employers.

St. Croix participants heard remarks from Brig. Gen. Deborah Y. Howell, the adjutant general of the Virgin Islands National Guard and the national chair for V.I.E.S.G.R., and retired Army Maj. Gen. Paul E. Mock.

Gen. Howell spoke about roles and responsibilities that members of the National Guard, employers and the community perform. She said Guard members have the dual role of citizen service members and employee. "Commanders are charged to take care of the Service member's family and ESGR takes care of the employer," Gen. Howell said.

Gen. Mock thanked the participants for hiring service members and spoke about the three core missions of V.I.E.S.G.R.

"Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is a Department of Defense program, staffed by volunteers. It recognizes that employers have strategic impact. E.S.G.R.'s mission is to develop and promote supportive work environments for Service members in the Reserve Components through outreach, recognition, and educational opportunities," said Gen. Mock.

St. Thomas attendees heard remarks from Capt. Josephine Hector-Murphy, the personnel officer for the 786th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. She thanked employers for hiring service members.

This year was the first time that St. John employers had a separate briefing.

"Last year the committee recognized that emphasis need to be placed on St. John and made a commitment to start this year," said Virgin Islands Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Chair Beresford Edwards. "The committee looks forward to continuing its outreach in the territory."

These briefings give employers a chance to hear the facts and to ask questions. They also serve as forums to discuss issues relevant to the workplace whether the employer is civilian, state, or federal.

"Currently, members of the 786th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion of the Virgin Islands Army National Guard are deployed away from their loved ones and places of business. These deployed Guard members serve, work, and live throughout the Virgin Islands. Support from their civilian employers allows these brave men to serve this great Nation, and the territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands," said Mr. Edwards.

Feature Image: Beresford Edwards, chair of the Virgin Islands Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve speaks to St. Thomas military representatives, private sector employers and local and federal government employers during the "Briefing with the Boss" held on St. Thomas, USVI March 16.