



2 February 2009

Chief, National Guard Bureau

The United States Army has designated 2009 as the "Year of the Noncommissioned Officer" and it is my honor to recognize the invaluable service of the Army National Guard Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs). The National Guard Bureau will dedicate this year to them and their contributions to the nation.

Staff Sergeant Michael Noyce Merino of the Montana National Guard, the Army's NCO of the Year, will be representing the Army and the Army National Guard at local and national events throughout 2009. Sergeant Merino exemplifies the professionalism, skill and knowledge that are the hallmarks of National Guard NCOs and we are immensely proud of this great American.

It is with utmost respect and admiration that I offer my sincere congratulations to all National Guard NCOs for a job well done.

CRAIG R. MCKINLEY
General, USAF
Chief, National Guard Bureau