



NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

111 SOUTH GEORGE MASON DRIVE
ARLINGTON VA 22204-1382

23 January 2009

For 372 years, our Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) have been the “Backbone” of the Army National Guard. Since 9/11 though, they have particularly proven to be its very heart and soul. Without a doubt, the successes of this organization in the past 7 years are rooted in the extraordinary patriotism of ordinary Citizens enlisting – *and reenlisting* - to serve in extraordinary times. The Army National Guard is *Army Strong* because our NCOs are the *Strength from Within*.

Our ranks consist of the most talented pool of professional NCOs ever to muster. Their unique depths and talents, forged in their communities, bring to the force the ability to operate, maintain, administer, manage, train, lead, fight, dominate, and win on today's battlefield. Today's Citizen/Soldier NCOs are the best and brightest of our Nation. Their boots on the ground represent the first steps of freedom for many nations across the globe. These NCOs serve in positions that are unprecedented in terms of their scope and with duties often unprecedented in terms of their responsibilities.

In an era of persistent conflict and protracted struggles, those who wear the Stripes and Rockers of the NCO Corps have never faltered in their defense of the Stars and Stripes. That is why the ARNG is proud to support the Department of the Army's initiative announcing 2009 as the “Year of the NCO”.

Hooah!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Clyde A. Vaughn", written over a horizontal line.

Clyde A. Vaughn
Lieutenant General, US Army
Director, Army National Guard

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John D. Gipe", written over a horizontal line.

John D. Gipe
Command Sergeant Major, US Army
Command Sergeant Major, Army National Guard