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Immediate Release

Marquee Artisan Wines Honored by Department of Defense for Extraordinary Support of Employees Who Serve in the Kansas National Guard and Reserve

Topeka, KS – The Kansas Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), an agency of the Department of Defense, announced today the Marquee Artisan Wines was honored with the **PRO PATRIA** award in recognition of extraordinary support of its employees who serve in the Kansas National Guard and Reserve. The award was presented at the Annual Planning and Awards Conference of the Kansas Committee of Employers Support of the Guard and Reserve on March 21, 2010 in Wichita, KS.

According to Mick Allen ESGR Kansas Chair, “The National Committee of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) sponsors an awards program designed to recognize employers for employment policies and practices that are supportive of their employees' participation in the National Guard and Reserve. All employer recognition and awards originate from nominations by individual Reserve component members. Depending on the degree of support, the level of recognition rises to the "Employer Support Freedom Award", given by the Secretary of Defense. **The PRO PATRIA Award** is presented to those employers who demonstrate exceptional support for our national defense by adopting personnel policies that make it easier for employees to participate in the National Guard and Reserve. Each Committee may give only one PRO PATRIA annually in each of three categories: large business, small business and the public sector.”

Marquee Artisan Wines joins with thousands of American Employers who have reviewed and amended their current human resources policies to ensure compliance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-Employment Rights Act Law (USERRA). Many employers provide above and beyond support with pay differential to offset the loss of wages, and extension of health care benefits which complement coverage provided by the military when their employees are mobilized.

MARQUEE ARTISAN WINES is located in Overland Park, Kansas and is an international wine import and export operation. It is a very small company having only four employees. Craig Skopec, a Staff Sergeant in the Kansas Army National Guard recommended General Manager Chris Cribb for an ESGR award. During periods of military training, Chris takes over and does all the duties that Sergeant Skopec normally takes care of. He is very supportive and recognizes Sergeant Skopec for his military accomplishments. He continues salary and benefits during his periods of absence for military duty

As the 1.3 million members of the National Guard and Reserve continue to perform an increasing number of unique missions with America's borders and beyond, ESGR will continue to be the resource for the employers of citizen warriors. ESGR provides education, consultation, and if necessary mediation for employers of Guard and Reserve employees. More information about ESGR Employer Outreach Programs and volunteer opportunities is available at www.esgr.mil, or by calling 785-274-1559.