

**AWARD NOMINATION
NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF ALABAMA
OUTSTANDING COMPANY GRADE OFFICER**

NAME: Bourgeois, Sonda M

GRADE: W1

MILITARY JOB TITLE/POSITION: Human Resources Technician (AGR),
135th ESC

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES:

Serves as the Human Resource (HR) advisor and manager for a major subordinate headquarters of the Alabama Army National Guard consisting of over 1400 Soldiers. Responsible for providing HR technical guidance and advice on all personnel and administrative programs. Assists in the planning, developing, interpreting, coordinating, integrating, and implementation of the 135TH ESC'S personnel programs and policies. Supervises Personnel Information Management (PIM), HR services, personnel automation systems management, HR technical and system training, and records management. Reviews personnel actions prepared by the battalion S-1 sections and ensures regulatory guidance is applied and enforced. Ensures the administrative preparedness and processing of all officers and enlisted personnel and actions within the command.

CIVILIAN JOB TITLE/POSITION: N/A

DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES: N/A

Award Nominated to Receive: Outstanding WARRANT OFFICER

Name: WO1 Sonda M. Bourgeois

Nominated by: LTC Joseph Byrd

Justification for the Award: Outstanding Performance

WO1 Sonda Bourgeois currently serves as the Human Resources Technician for the G1, 135th Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC). She strives for excellence in all of her duties and performs in a superior manner. She has created a learning environment in the G1 section and has used every opportunity to teach Soldiers within the headquarters and throughout the MACOM on updates and changes to administrative processes and procedures. Personnel throughout the MACOM have gained a wealth of knowledge related to administrative records, retirement, pay, medical actions, and other information because of her efforts. She is constantly sought out for her experience and wisdom. Her expertise in Human Resources alone is worth commendation.

Ms. Bourgeois consistently engaged Battalion S1s and Company Administrative NCOs to ensure the units within the 135th ESC were prepared for the launch of the Integrated Personnel and Pay Systems – Army (IIPPS-A). She has been leaning forward during the IPPS-A conversion to ensure personnel actions were correctly made within the new system. She has worked closely with the state and other MACOM Human Resource Technicians to learn and overcome challenges the new system created. She has expanded her knowledge with IPPS-A over the past several months and is now using that knowledge and expertise to mentor and train other admin sections within the MACOM and across the state. She goes above and beyond taking the time to conduct regular training sessions to clarify issues and procedures.

Ever since IPPS-A has launched, there have been many setbacks and obstacles. Ms. Bourgeois has handled these adversities with professionalism, dedication, and tenacity. For almost every update or conversion within IPPS-A, there were challenges she had to overcome to successfully ensure Soldiers' benefits remained intact. She has demonstrated that her dedication to Guard Soldiers is well beyond any of her own personal interests as she works late nights, during weekends, and on off-days to make sure Soldiers' needs are administered to.

On her own time, Ms. Bourgeois authored and published the MACOM's "How To Guide" for the State's Monthly Strength Management Reports to ensure all units understood how to complete the new report. This document was the basis for successful reporting procedures by the units to provide unit commanders, the MACOM Chief of Staff, the Commanding General, and the State Chief of Staff with visibility of retention efforts among units' leadership. Her guide was eventually adopted by the Deputy Chief of Staff – Personnel (DCSPER) and is now being used for all units within the state.

Ms. Bourgeois made it her priority to refine procedures for TOC operations within the G1's SOP during the unit's COMDEX and Annual Training exercises. With a new G1 Staff, she made it her priority to be the lead expertise for the section in the training environments. These exercises were some of the most challenging and she performed superbly under strained, austere conditions. She made changes, as necessary, to ensure the Headquarters had the right battle drills and reporting procedures in place for all administrative actions. She designed new PERSTAT report formats for exercises and real-world future deployments. Her accomplishments during these exercises were an extraordinary undertaking to which Ms. Bourgeois excelled.

Ms. Bourgeois spent numerous hours planning, coordinating, and executing promotion ceremonies, retirement ceremonies, receptions, change of command ceremonies, and other formal events for the MACOM. For over a year, she was the single force behind planning the MACOM's Dining Out in 2019 at Ross Bridge Resort in Birmingham, AL. Her efforts provided the unit with the most successful Dining Out in the history of the 135th ESC. She does such an outstanding job preparing for unit ceremonies and functions, she is always asked to assist the 20th Special Forces Group with their annual Dining Out.

Ms. Bourgeois performs tasks that normally require multiple Administrative NCOs and conducts these tasks without complaint. She exhibits exceptional initiative, dedication, and professionalism performing her duties. She consistently works extremely hard to take care of Soldiers. Her commitment to excellence and understanding of administrative systems ensures the 135th ESC performs to the fullest extent in human resource procedures.

Sonda M. Bourgeois

WO1 Sonda Bourgeois is a Human Resources Technician at the 135th Expeditionary Sustainment Command in Birmingham, Alabama.

She was enlisted in the U. S. Navy from June of 1988 to October of 1992. Sonda attended Navy basic training in Orlando, Florida and A school at Great Lakes, Illinois. Following A school she was assigned to the USS Yosemite AD19 out of Mayport, Florida as an Instrumentman. While serving on the USS Yosemite she was deployed to Desert Storm/Desert Shield. She had the honor of being selected for Sailor of the Quarter during her tour.

After a two- and half-year break in service Sonda enlisted in the U. S. Army March of 1995. After completion of basic training at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina she went to Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri to train as a Motor Transport Operator. Sonda was stationed at Ft. Benning, Georgia with the 104th Transportation Company until January 1997.

Having missed the military after 10 years she joined the Alabama Army National Guard. Sonda completed the Health Care Specialist and the Patient Administrative Specialist course at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas. She was assigned to the 128th Medical Company (GA) in Ashland, Alabama. Sonda had the honor of deploying with the 128th Medical Company (GA) to Al Asad, Iraq from September of 2008 until March of 2009.

December of 2012 Sonda applied for and was selected as an Active Guard/Reserve Soldier. She served with the Alabama Medical Detachment until February of 2017. While with the Alabama Medical Detachment, Sonda completed the Human Resources Specialist course. Sonda transferred to the 161st Multifunctional Medical Battalion in Mobile, Alabama where she was the Readiness NCO until her selection for Warrant Officer. Sonda attended Warrant Officer Candidate School at Ft. McClellan, Alabama and Warrant Officer Basic Course at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina in 2018.

While deployed to Iraq a flag was flown over the Headquarters of the Multi-National Corps in her honor. She has received three Army Commendation Medals and three Army Achievement Medals.

Sonda completed her bachelor's degree in Health Care Administration in 2011 from the University of Phoenix. An achievement Sonda is proud of is the establishment of the medical records section for the Alabama Army National Guard. Approximately 14,000 active and retired Soldier's records were maintained. She developed the Standard Operating Procedures and protocols.

