



Perris Press Release

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Perris Honored for Supporting Reservists

The City of Perris was honored by the U.S. military Thursday for supporting Public Works employee Juan Lemus, a Navy Reservist who has been deployed in recent years to Iraq, Okinawa and Germany.

Employers who “work around the schedules of our citizen warriors” make possible the U.S. military commitments in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Middle East and elsewhere, said Patrick Kuykendall, the California executive director of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, a Department of Defense agency.

“It is a tough job for employers,” Kuykendall said. “But what your employees are doing is remarkable. You are getting the best of the best.”

Navy Cdr. Dan Burns said the repeated deployments of U.S. Army and Marine Corps units since 2001 have taken their toll on active-duty service members.

Reservists like Lemus are filling vital jobs once assigned only to full-time active-duty soldiers, like driving trucks, performing customs checks, providing base perimeter security and building roads and schools.

“Without employers allowing Reservists and members of the National Guard to participate and fulfill their military commitments, there is no way the active-duty service could accomplish all that needs to be done,” Burns said.

Lemus nominated Assistant City Manager Ron Carr to accept the Navy Reserve Employer Appreciation Award on behalf of Perris. Human Resources Manager Isabel Lugo also attended the ceremony.

The City received a plaque and certificate of appreciation for its efforts as a Patriotic Employer.

“American is strong because of the brave men and women who have made great sacrifices to defend our country,” reads the inscription on the certificate. “Since 1915, Navy Reservist Sailors have answered our Nation’s call, and today are serving around the world. The Navy Reserve could not accomplish our mission—to provide strategic depth and deliver operational capabilities to our Navy and Marine Corps team, and Joint forces, from peace to war—without your support...By creating a workforce that embraces and values their military service, you are also part of what it takes to keep our Nation strong.”

Carr said the City of Perris deeply appreciates Lemus’ service.

“We are so honored to be here,” Carr said. “Thanks to Juan Lemus for not only the work he does on behalf of the City but for your service to our country.”

Lemus has served in the Navy Reserves for 10 years.

A Petty Officer 2nd Class assigned to Navy Mobile Construction Battalion 17-Detachment 15, Lemus spent much of 2008 in Balad, Iraq, building gymnasiums, huts and barracks, repairing roads and improving the quality of electrical service.

He said the construction team was forced to wear body armor and combat helmets and work in temperatures that routinely reached 130 degrees. Iraqi insurgents fired rocket-propelled grenades at the Americans which sometimes exploded 200 or 300 feet from where they were working.

Despite the dangers, Lemus said he believes his work made a difference in Iraq and that he is proud to wear a U.S. Navy uniform.

He is also grateful to the City of Perris for its ongoing commitment to his military mission.

“I appreciate what the City has done to support me,” he said.



Navy Reserve Petty Officer 2nd Class Juan Lemus is flanked by Cdr. Dan Burns and Assistant Perris City Manager Ron Carr. The City of Perris received a Patriotic Employer Award for supporting Lemus in his military mission, which included a deployment to Iraq in 2008.