

# Pat Hirt, ED Director, receives Patriot Award

*Fire Chief, City Manager also recognized for supporting reservist*

Pat Hirt, Emergency Department (ED) Director at War Memorial Hospital, was presented last week with the Patriot Award from a US Department of Defense office known as ESGR – or Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

She was nominated by Paul and Lisa Young, of Sault Ste. Marie, for her support while Paul, a US Navy Reservist, was deployed in Afghanistan for nine months in 2013. His wife, Lisa, is a registered nurse in the emergency department and mother of two young children.

According to the ESGR website, the Patriot Award “reflects the efforts made to support Citizen Warriors through a wide-range of measures including flexible schedules, time off prior to and after deployment, caring for families and granting leaves of absence if needed.”



Hirt fit the description of a supportive, caring employer before, during, and after deployment, according to Lisa.

“While Paul was away, I found it difficult at times to care for a household alone, pay bills, care for our two small children and work in the Emergency Department. Pat was supportive, above and beyond, with my schedule in allowing me to take time to travel out of state to be with family and allowing me to be home with my children during this challenging time,” she said.

But it wasn’t just during the deployment. “For years, Pat has worked around Paul’s Navy Reserve schedule to allow me to be home with my children every month while he is away,” she added.

Hirt, who was presented with the award during a staff meeting at WMH, knew nothing of the nomination or the award in advance.

“I was so surprised and appreciative. It is Paul and Lisa that did the work for our nation,” said the ED director.

Hirt wasn’t the only one to be recognized. Paul works full-time for the City of Sault Ste. Marie Fire Department. His supervisor, Fire Chief Jason Thorpe, was also presented with the Patriot Award for the flexibility and support he has consistently shown toward Paul’s career as a reservist. City Manager Oliver

Turner was also presented with an award acknowledging the support of the City Manager's office during Paul's deployment.

Paul and Lisa Young and their children, Levi (4) and Ava (2) presented the awards to Hirt, Thorpe and Turner at WMH on December 18.

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