

Governor Rauner opens Illinois Army National Guard Senior Leader Conference

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Three day conference highlights leadership, ethics, developing the force and readiness

SPRINGFIELD - Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner, the Commander-in-Chief of the Illinois National Guard, opened up the Illinois Army National Guard's Senior Leader Conference on Friday by telling the more than 130 senior-ranking Soldiers about the importance of identifying leaders within their ranks and empowering them.

"That's what I did in business. I found talented innovative leaders who knew how to build teams and I backed them," the Governor said. "Sometimes it didn't work out, but far more often than not, it did."

The Governor said he sees his role as a "servant" leader. "Yes, by title, I am the Commander-in-Chief of the Illinois National Guard. But, really, I see myself as working for you," he told the military leadership assembled at Camp Lincoln for the conference.

The Illinois Army National Guard Senior Leader's Conference is a three-day workshop, running from Feb. 26-28, for command teams at the battalion level and above. Battalion Commanders are upper management who command between 300 to 700 Soldiers across three or four different locations. The conference is focused on leadership, ethics, increasing our connection to the community, individual and unit readiness, force development, and embodying the Minuteman.

Guest speakers include Maj. Gen. Charles W. Whittington Jr., the First Army Deputy Commanding General – Operations; Rear Admiral Margaret Klein, the Senior Advisor to the Secretary of Defense for Military Professionalism; Dr. Rick Olsen, an expert on leadership issues and cultural change from the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College; Col. (ret.) Robert Simpson, an expert on Russian New Generation Warfare working for The Patuxent Partnership in support of the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command's Army Capabilities Integration Center; Lt. Col. Kelly C. Brown, a Fellow in the Chief of Staff of the Army's Strategic Studies Group; and Lt. Col. Krista M. Soria, a strategic analyst for Force 2025 and Beyond, Army Capabilities Integration Center.