

Governor Rauner recognizes Guard's top marksmen

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SPRINGFIELD - Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner recognized the Illinois National Guard's top marksmen during a ceremony following The Adjutant General's Pistol and Rifle Marksmanship Competition at Marseilles Training Center in Marseilles, Illinois, Aug. 21.

Twenty teams of four Soldiers each from units across the state took part in the week-long competition consisting of multiple shooting scenarios scored for both individual and team points. The top 20 individual scores took honors as the "Governor's 20" and will later be given an opportunity to tryout for the state's Small Arms Readiness and Training Team (SARTS).



The 2016 awardees of the Governor's 20 in order of placement are:

1. Sgt. 1st Class William Gibbs of Litchfield, Illinois, - the 661st Engineer Fire Fighting Team
2. Spc. Mason Roth of Carthage, Illinois, - the 1844th Transportation Company
3. Chief Warrant Officer 2 Joseph Nicholas of Cedar Lake, Indiana - Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 106th Aviation Regiment
4. Sgt. William Burleson of Waukegan, Illinois, - Company D, 1st Battalion, 178th Infantry Regiment
5. Spc. Joshua Doss of Centralia, Illinois, - Company B, 766th Brigade Engineer Battalion

6. Sgt. Timothy James of Palatine, Illinois, - Company B, 1st Battalion, 178th Infantry Regiment
7. Sgt. 1st Class Kaj Holgersson of Coal Valley, Illinois, - Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 123rd Engineer Battalion
8. Chief Warrant Officer 4 Cameron Stanberry of Arenzville, Illinois, - Joint Forces Headquarters, Illinois
9. Staff Sgt. Colton Love of Shannon, Illinois, - Company A, 1st Battalion, 178th Infantry Regiment
10. Chief Warrant Officer 4 Keith Koca of Custer Park, Illinois, - Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 106th Aviation Regiment
11. Sgt. Justin Snyder of Monticello, Illinois, - Company B, 634th Brigade Support Battalion
12. Sgt. Joseph Lelys of Auburn, Illinois, - Company C, 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry Regiment
13. Staff Sgt. John Hunter of Rockton, Illinois, - Company A, 405th Brigade Support Battalion
14. Sgt. Christopher Burbach of Belvedere, Illinois, - Detachment 1, Company A, 766th Engineer Battalion
15. Sgt. Jon Harney of Savoy, Illinois, - Company B, 634th Brigade Support Battalion
16. Sgt. Gino Maldonado of Springfield, Illinois, - the 233rd Military Police Company
17. Sgt. Nolan Murphy of Streator, Illinois, - Company A, 405th Brigade Support Battalion
18. Spc. Zachary Dively of Cape Girardeau, Missouri, - the 661st Engineer Company
19. Sgt. 1st Class Walter Homeier of Edinburg, Illinois, - Headquarters, 129th Regional Training Institute
20. Sgt. Joseph Miller of Petersburg, Illinois, - Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 106th Aviation Regiment

Sgt. 1st Class John Stockton of Springfield, Illinois, a member of the SARTS team and Joint Force Headquarters based in Springfield, Illinois, said that the SARTS team was excited to bring the winners back later in the year to tryout for the team.

"There were a lot of good shooters here this week," said Stockton. "The team is really looking forward to bringing them back here to tryout and fill in the next state shooting team."

Rauner recognized the contributions and accomplishments of the Illinois National Guard and the marksmen present before officially tabbing his top 20 marksmen.

"We're here to celebrate some of the best of the best in marksmanship," said Rauner. "But in virtually every regard, Illinois has the best battalions and the best units in the National Guard. Congratulations."

