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Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) Announces 2018 Award Recipients

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (February 26, 2018) — [Military Officers Association of America \(MOAA\)](#) will present its annual awards to six people who have made outstanding contributions in support of the military community. The awards will be presented at an April event on Capitol Hill; all awardees are expected to attend.

2018 Arthur T. Marix Congressional Leadership Award

U.S. Reps. Martha McSally (R) and Kyrsten Sinema (D), both of Arizona, will receive MOAA's 2018 Arthur T. Marix Congressional Leadership Award for their strong leadership advocacy to sustain our nation's all-volunteer force. McSally is a member of the House Committee on Armed Services, and Sinema is a member of the Financial Services Committee. The Marix Award is named for the retired Marine Corps colonel who founded MOAA in 1929. It is presented annually to members of Congress who distinguish themselves in protecting the rights and interests of uniformed services members, their families, and survivors.

"We selected Representatives McSally and Sinema because of their committee contributions in support of military servicemembers, veterans, and their families in the past and what we hope to see more of in the future," said retired Army Col. Mike Barron, MOAA's government relations director for currently serving and retired affairs.

2018 Distinguished Service Award

Tim Barone, president and CEO of Arizona-based Vantage Mobility International, and **Kevin Johnson**, president and CEO of Starbucks Coffee Company, will receive MOAA's Distinguished Service Award. Barone will receive the award for Vantage Mobility International's work helping thousands of disabled veterans achieve independence and mobility, while Johnson's award recognizes Starbucks Coffee Company's continued support in the hiring of veterans and military spouses. The award recognizes organizations or individuals not in Congress who have greatly aided people who served in the U.S. armed forces.

"Tim Barone and Vantage Mobility International are helping wounded service members reclaim independence," said MOAA's president and CEO, retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Dana Atkins. "That impacts every aspect of their lives."

Veteran unemployment is always on MOAA's radar, Atkins said. "Starbucks Coffee Company is taking a stand where it can, in the way it can, to help with that. I am proud to honor Kevin Johnson and Starbucks with the 2018 Distinguished Service Award."

2018 Colonel Paul W. Arcari Meritorious Service Award



Jorge Rueda, formerly with the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, and **Samantha Gonzalez**, with the House Veterans' Affairs Committee, will receive MOAA's 2018 Colonel Paul W. Arcari Meritorious Service Award. Rueda is being recognized for his advocacy on veterans' issues, and Gonzalez is being recognized for her advocacy to sustain veterans' health care. The Arcari award, which honors congressional staff members who have made significant contributions to the uniformed services community, is named for the retired officer who led MOAA's Government Relations Department from 1990 until 2001.

"Veterans issues — health care, employment, earned benefits, retirement — are among MOAA's top goals," MOAA Vice President of Government Relations and retired Air Force Col. Dan Merry said. "We cannot overlook the efforts of those who are working with us to achieve those goals."

MOAA has awarded the Marix and Distinguished Service awards since 1997. Past recipients of the Marix Award include Sens. Lindsay Graham, John McCain, and Jim Webb; past recipients of the Distinguished Service Award include Tom Brokaw, Toby Keith, and retired Army Gen. Colin Powell. The Arcari award recognizing congressional staff members was first awarded in 2000. For more information about MOAA, please visit www.moaa.org.

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About MOAA:

Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) is the nation's largest military officers' association with more than 350,000 members from every branch of uniformed service, including active duty, retired, National Guard, Reserve, and former officers and their families and survivors. MOAA is a nonprofit and politically nonpartisan organization and an influential force in promoting a strong national defense. MOAA represents the interests of service members and their families in every stage of their lives and careers, and for those who are not eligible to join MOAA, Voices for America's Troops is a nonprofit MOAA affiliate that supports a strong national defense. For more information, visit www.moaa.org or www.voicesfortroops.org.

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