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## HAVING A GREAT TEAM MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE!

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### What are your favorite aspects of NEMA?

- The ability to have a national voice and seat at the table on issues of national importance.
- The ability to network and learn from my peers and share best practices.
- The ability to shape policy and federal initiatives.

### 2015 is a historical marker for both you and the State of Illinois, as you were the first woman to be promoted to General in the Illinois National Guard. How does that achievement enhance how you lead your team today?

My selection to Brigadier General is more about the soldiers and airmen that I served with and for, who melded me into the leader I am today. I have them and my family to thank for the opportunities I was provided. Through this experience I learned to spot talent and hopefully how to foster growth in others. I attribute my time in the military with showing me not to look at the difference in people (race, ethnicity, gender) but rather focus on what each individual brings to the table in solving the issue at hand. I'm thankful to have had an opportunity to serve in and out of uniform with so many AMAZING people.

### As a Retired Brigadier General, you are a member of Mission: Readiness. Tell us more about the nonpartisan national security organization and how this organization leverages our younger generations in staying out of harm's way?

Mission: Readiness is a council for a strong America made up of 750 retired admirals, generals and other top military leaders focused on championing evidence based, bipartisan public policy solutions focused on preparing our youth for life and the ability serve their nation in any way they choose. We examine and advocate for things like childhood nutrition, high quality childcare just to name a few.

### Who is the most intelligent or creative person you know?

Gil Nadeau without a question. No matter what the topic he has either read a book/s on it, done it or is in the process of learning about it. His superpower is encouraging others and helping them achieve their dreams.

### What is the most unique shop or restaurant you have been in?

The most unique culinary experience I have ever experienced was not in a restaurant but being invited to share a meal with three local tribal leaders in Iraq. I was part of a multi-national Division in Iraq and we provided medical care to several villages. At the end of the day a small group of us were invited to share a meal with village elders. Although a poor village, they roasted a goat and put on a big feast to thank us. Although, we didn't speak the same language, sharing a meal on the desert floor celebrating our achievement of providing much needed health care to locals is a memory I will always cherish. That and the fact that I actually ate a goat eyeball!

### What was the last thing you were really excited about?

- Being selected to be a mentor for Big Brothers Big Sisters – My Little rocks!
- Watching my adult children follow their dreams
- Implementing Safe2Help Illinois, a statewide school safety program focused on preventing school violence. Our helpline has allowed Illinois youth to reach out to a trusted agent and receive help through a safe and confidential outlet. Safe2Help is attributed with preventing several youths from committing suicide. Saving even one life has made this effort a labor of love and one I'm very pleased to have been a part of implementing.

**The success of every woman should be the inspiration to another. We should raise each other up. Make sure you're very courageous: be strong, be extremely kind, and above all be humble.**

– Serena Williams



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Huntington Convention Center  
Cleveland, Ohio  
October 12-15

Sponsorships are open to members.  
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