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**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**By Sgt. Marisa Lindsay**

**Introducing the Alaska military spouse of the year**

**Joint-Base Elmendorf Richardson, Alaska** — Jenifer Burris, a criminal justice auditor with the Alaska Department of Public Safety, was chosen as the Alaska National Guard spouse of the year by Military Spouse magazine.

Burris was selected after being nominated by her husband, Chief Master Sgt. Stephen Burris, of the 176th Air Defense Squadron, Alaska Air National Guard.

Alongside full-time employment with the state and her pursuit of a bachelor's degree in counseling, Burris volunteers her off-time with organizations that focus their efforts on military service members, veterans, and their families, including Forget Me Not; Partners in Care; and the Coalition for Service Members, Veterans and Families.

Burris' volunteer position as key mentor spouse for her husband's unit is where she feels she is able to make the greatest impact.

"With 16 years under my belt, I see myself as a wife who has more tenure than many of our other military spouses — my impression of what I do as a key mentor is simply be available to our next generation of military families," Burris said. "They are the ones who are going to come behind us and pick up the torch, they are the ones that are going to help hold our military families together, and what better mentor than someone like myself who has lived it."

Burris lends her time assisting 176th ADS spouses with anything that they may need — whether it is to learn how to cook, prepare household budgets, bake cakes and goodies for their children's birthday parties, babysit, or drop off a meal to families with newborn children.

"It's amazing to be a part of something bigger than just yourself," said Burris. "This is an incredible group of families and I am proud to be a part of it. I love my Air Defense Squadron, Top Rock!"

This is the second year that Military Spouse magazine has expanded its annual spouse of the year award to include base, state and district-level recognition.

"The military spouses who have maintained the home front during deployments and training missions have accomplished remarkable feats," said Kate Dolack, Editor-in-Chief of Military Spouse magazine. "Now, perhaps more than ever, it is important to recognize those stand-out spouses from all branches and at every installation and honor them for their achievements."

The overall winner for the 2015 Military Spouse of the Year, who will be selected from more than 170 bases, posts and Coast Guard districts, will be revealed at a ceremony in Washington, DC, May 8.

"I am completely humbled by this entire experience," Burris said. "What an honor and opportunity."

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