

Illinois State Police Colonel Named Illinois National Guard Land Forces Commander

Written by Illinois National Guard PAO
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Michael Zerbonia of Chatham to Be Promoted to Brigadier General

SPRINGFIELD, IL (06/04/2013)(readMedia)-- Brig. Gen. Daniel M. Krumrei, the Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard, has appointed Col. Michael Zerbonia of Chatham, Ill., as the Illinois National Guard's Land Forces Commander.

The appointment means Zerbonia will also be promoted to brigadier general and will command approximately 10,000 Illinois Army National Guard Soldiers.

"Our Soldiers deserve the best possible leadership and Colonel Zerbonia is one of our best leaders," said Krumrei. "He is a strategic thinker and planner, and his value to this organization and to the people of Illinois grows each day."

Zerbonia has more than 30 years of military service. He enlisted as a military policeman in the Missouri National Guard in 1983 and commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1986. He recently commanded the Bilateral Embedded Staff Team A10 in Afghanistan and previously commanded the 108th Sustainment Brigade based in Chicago.

Zerbonia is the Colonel of Operations for the Illinois State Police.

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"Michael has spent decades in uniform serving the Illinois State Police and the U.S. military dedicating his career to service and honor," said Illinois State Police Director Hiram Grau. "His commitment to leadership and duty is further exemplified by this added badge of rank, and the men and women of this agency are proud of his accomplishment."

During the severe winter storm in February 2011, Zerbonia saw his State Police Troopers and his Soldiers work side-by-side after National Guard Soldiers were activated to help the State Police mitigate the effects of the storm.

"My two careers coincided directly then. While both organizations have different roles to play, both go out and protect the citizens of Illinois," said Zerbonia. "It is a great honor to be a leader in both."

Zerbonia holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Northeast Missouri State University and a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College. As a civilian, Zerbonia also serves as the president of the National Guard Association of Illinois.

He said every leadership position he's held in the National Guard has prepared him to be the Land Forces Commander and he looks forward to the challenge.

"One of the number one missions for the National Guard is homeland security and that dovetails perfectly with what I do with the Illinois State Police," said Zerbonia.