



News Release

For more information, contact:

Barbara Gould
Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC
(440) 329-9609 | (440) 225-6869
barbara.gould@bendix.com

or

Ken Kesegich
Marcus Thomas LLC
(888) 482-4455
kkesegich@mtllc.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE HONORS

BENDIX EMPLOYEE WITH PATRIOT AWARD

Recognition Helps Spotlight Internal Efforts Supporting Service Members

AVON, Ohio – Nov. 25, 2024 – To hear Kinjal Mistry and Keith McComsey tell it, they're both just doing their jobs: McComsey is director of air disc brake systems and products at Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC (Bendix) in Avon, Ohio, and Mistry is a product owner in McComsey's department – as well as a chief petty officer in the United States Coast Guard Reserve. And through Mistry's efforts, the U.S. Department of Defense's Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) office recently recognized McComsey with its Patriot Award.

"I wanted to take a step to express my sincere gratitude to Keith and Bendix for unwavering support of my military duties," Mistry said. "A true leader is not just one who guides in the workplace but also one who supports the call of duty, understanding that service to country is just as important as service to company. Knowing that I have the backing of such a supportive employer has made balancing my responsibilities much easier. Bendix's commitment to the well-being of employees who serve in the military is truly commendable, and it makes a significant difference in the lives of those who serve."

The ESGR office was established in 1972 to promote cooperation and understanding between Reserve component service members and their civilian employers and to assist in the resolution of conflicts arising from an employee's military commitment. The Patriot Award – given to individual supervisors, and not to an entire staff or organization – reflects the efforts made to support citizen warriors through a wide range of measures, including flexible

schedules; time off prior to and after deployment; caring for families; and granting leaves of absence, if needed.

“Supporting Kinjal’s service in the reserves was an easy choice because I have the utmost respect for those who serve and sacrifice like she does,” McComsey said. “I wanted to clear the way so she could do that without feeling uncomfortable, and without any thought that this might be viewed as a burden in the workplace. It’s an honor to accept this recognition, and while our co-workers and I appreciate all that Kinjal does here at Bendix, the thanks for her service to our country comes from all of us and our families as well.”

Meet the Bendix Patriots

Bendix IT Manager Marc Sotak leads the Bendix Patriots, an employee resource group that aims to support service members and veterans within the company, within an employee’s family, and in the larger community. Participation in the group is open to all employees. Keith McComsey, who himself is not a military veteran or reservist, is an enthusiastic Bendix Patriots member. Activities have included organizing an annual Veterans Day recognition breakfast for employees; volunteering on National Wreaths Across America Day; and hosting guest speakers, such as an author and former combat physician.

“I served eight years, but when I joined Bendix 20 years back, there wasn’t a lot of awareness in the organization about what it would mean if I continued my active duty in the reserves and could potentially be deployed and have to step away from the workplace,” Sotak said. “Things are thankfully a little different now, and when Kinjal made me aware of the Patriot Award program, I saw a great opportunity to help our group build bridges between veterans and their families and the community. It’s about helping contribute to understanding, and educating, and making a difference.”

Pulling Together

Mistry, who is also a wife and mother, has served in the Coast Guard since 2014. She joined Bendix in 2016, and McComsey has been her supervisor since 2020. Since joining Bendix, in addition to the expected reserve periods, she has also experienced an extended deployment of several months.

“I was deployed in 2017 to support Hurricane Harvey and multiple times after that. The support I received from Bendix during my extended deployments has been invaluable,” Mistry explained. “Their understanding, flexibility, and unwavering commitment to my well-being allowed me to focus on my duties without the added stress of workplace concerns. It’s rare to

find an employer who genuinely supports both the professional and personal challenges that come with military service, and for that, I am truly grateful.”

McComsey said there was never a question that the Bendix team would have Mistry’s back.

“Collectively, we knew we’d be supporting her,” he recalled. “Not all of us have served – I haven’t myself – but we all wanted to do our part to help Kinjal so she could focus fully on her role in the military and helping to protect all of us.”

About Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems LLC

Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, a member of Knorr-Bremse, develops and supplies leading-edge active safety technologies, energy management solutions, and air brake charging and control systems and components under the Bendix® brand name for medium- and heavy-duty trucks, tractors, trailers, buses, and other commercial vehicles throughout North America. An industry pioneer, employing more than 4,400 people, Bendix – and its wholly owned subsidiary, R.H. Sheppard Co., Inc. – is driven to deliver the best solutions for improved vehicle safety, performance, and overall operating cost. Contact us at 1-800-AIR-BRAKE (1-800-247-2725) or visit [bendix.com](https://www.bendix.com). Stay connected and informed through Bendix expert podcasts, blog posts, videos, and other resources at [knowledge-dock.com](https://www.knowledge-dock.com). Follow Bendix on X, formerly known as Twitter, at https://x.com/Bendix_CVS. Log on and learn from the Bendix experts at [brake-school.com](https://www.brake-school.com). And to learn more about career opportunities at Bendix, visit [bendix.com/careers](https://www.bendix.com/careers).

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