



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pete Harckham

Harckham Honors First Woman / Latina Commander of National Guard's 53rd Troop Command at Camp Smith

[Pete Harckham](#)

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State Sen. Pete Harckham and Brig. Gen. Isabel Rivera Smith

Senator also extends thanks to Guard members for their work in NYS correctional facilities

Camp Smith, NY – New York State Senator Pete Harckham presented a special Senate Proclamation and medal today to Brigadier General Isabel Rivera Smith, the first woman and Latina commander of the New York Army National Guard's 53rd Troop Command, based here at the Camp Smith Training Site here in Cortlandt, NY.

"I congratulate General Smith for assuming command of this important unit in the Army National Guard and being a trailblazer as the first woman and Latina to head the 53rd Troop Command," Harckham said. "I also want to thank Guard members from Camp Smith who are assisting the New York State Department of Corrections as it faces current challenges in upstate correctional facilities. The sacrifice and commitment of these men and women show how invaluable they are to all New Yorkers."

Appointed in October 2024 to replace Major General Jack James at Camp Smith, Brig. Gen. Smith is the first Latina and woman to lead one of the New York Army National Guard's two major commands.

"As commander of the 53rd Troop Command, it is an honor to be recognized by Senator Harckham for all the hard work that our soldiers do to support not only the

National Guard, but also for the many local communities that we assist,” said Smith, an Iraq War veteran.

The 53rd Troop Command is one of the New York Guard’s two general officer commands, with troops located across the state in combat support and combat service support roles. The Guard was recently deployed to assist workers at state correctional facilities with tasks including distributing meals and medication to incarcerated individuals and helping maintain general order and wellness.

Brig. Gen. Smith also serves as the Director of Joint Staff for the New York National Guard, overseeing joint Army and Air Guard operations, which include responses to state emergencies. She will continue in that role while serving as the 53rd Troop Command leader.

Born in Lorain, OH, of Puerto Rican parents, Smith enlisted in the active Army in October 1985 as a Motor Transport Operator. Her command assignments and operational deployment include commander of Headquarters detachment of the 53d Troop Command, commander of the 369th Special Troops Battalion, and deputy team chief at Iraq Police National Headquarters in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2010.

Brig. Gen. Smith’s awards include the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, the Army Achievement Medal, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and the Humanitarian Service Medal. She is also the recipient of the 2017 Latina Style Military Service Award.