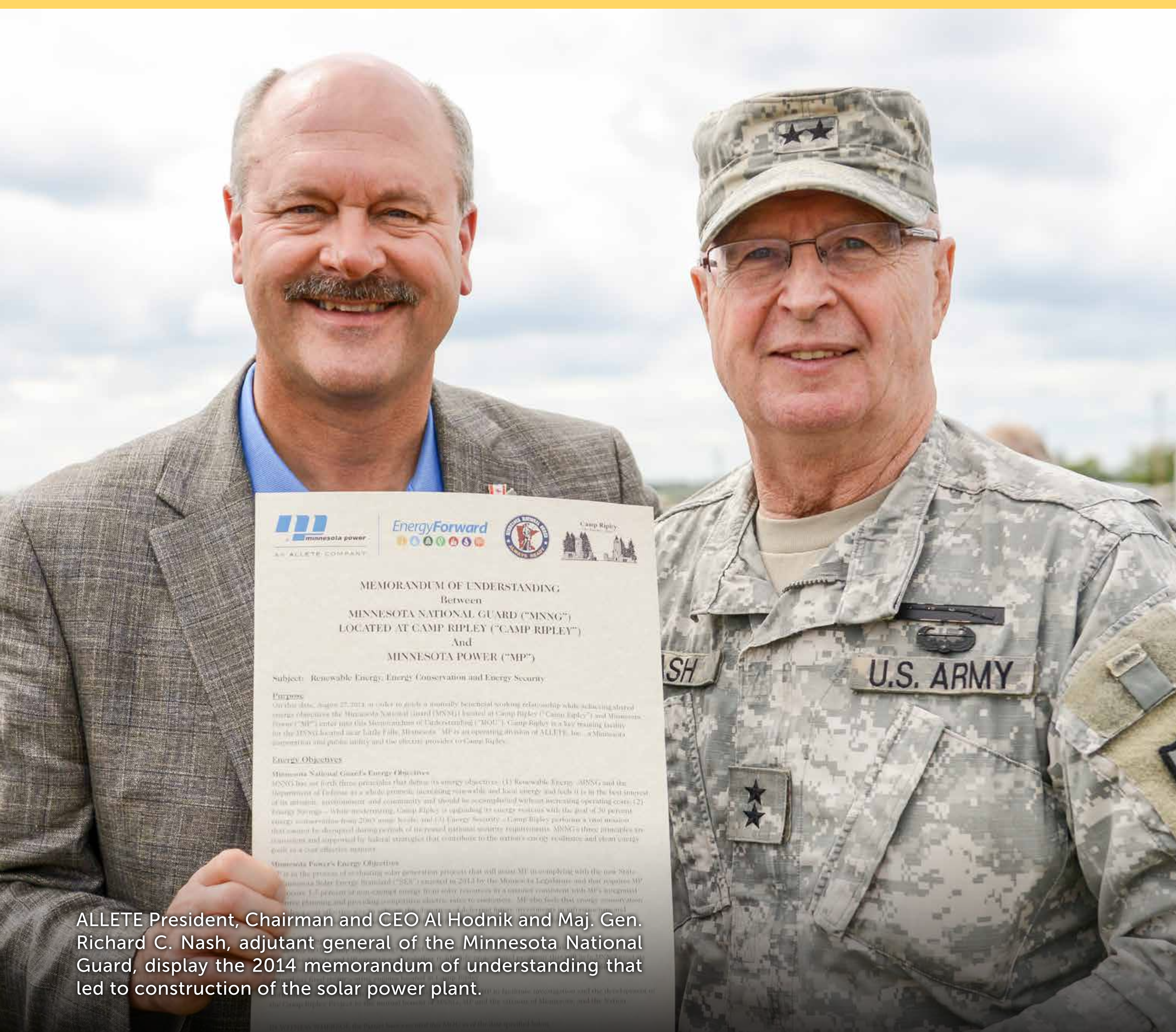
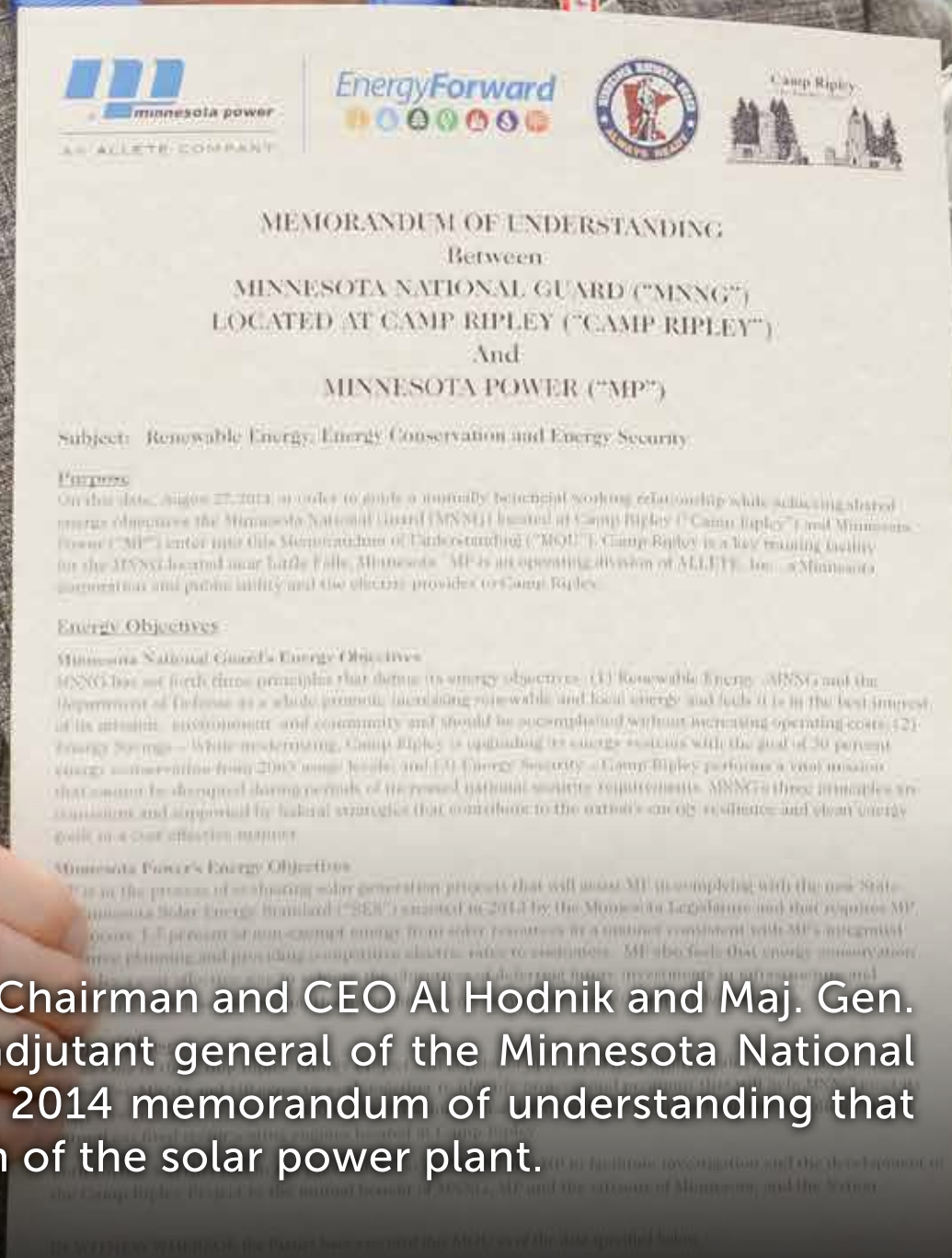


Our Solar Partnership



ALLETE President, Chairman and CEO Al Hodnik and Maj. Gen. Richard C. Nash, adjutant general of the Minnesota National Guard, display the 2014 memorandum of understanding that led to construction of the solar power plant.



U.S. Rep. Rick Nolan speaks at the Aug. 27, 2014, signing ceremony for the memorandum of understanding at Camp Ripley while U.S. Sen. Al Franken (from left), ALLETE President, Chairman and CEO Al Hodnik, and Maj. Gen. Richard C. Nash listen.



Photovoltaic solar panels are attached to racks during construction of the Camp Ripley solar power plant in 2016.

PROVIDING CLEANER FORMS OF ENERGY IS THE MISSION AS THE NATION TRANSFORMS ITS ENERGY LANDSCAPE, AND MINNESOTA POWER AND THE MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD ARE ON THE FRONT LINES.

Toward that end, Minnesota Power and the Minnesota National Guard officially embarked on a renewable energy partnership in 2014. It was perhaps the next logical step in a decades-long relationship between the energy provider and the military.

The unique partnership was spelled out in an agreement signed under sunny skies at the National Guard base on Aug. 27, 2014. The intent of the collaboration is to increase renewable energy production, reduce the overall use of energy at Camp Ripley, and promote energy security.

The first part of that collaboration—increasing renewable energy production—is the 10-megawatt solar power plant you see here. In 2016, it was the largest solar project on any National Guard base in the nation. In addition to joining forces on the solar array, Minnesota Power also will use its experience with conservation technologies to assist Camp Ripley in reducing its energy use and moving the base nearer to its goal of becoming a net-zero facility. Net-zero facilities produce as much renewable energy as they use.

To promote energy security, the third aspect of the 2014 agreement, backup power generators will be installed to protect Camp Ripley's energy supply during electric system disturbance or in emergencies. Although the base won't disconnect from the electric power grid with the completion of the solar array, it will have the ability to do so, if necessary. For example, should there be a catastrophic event, the base could isolate itself from the

electric power grid and use the solar array and backup generation to produce all the electricity it needed. Most of the time, however, the clean, renewable energy generated by this solar plant will flow into Minnesota Power's electric distribution system to serve Camp Ripley and nearby communities, including Little Falls and Nisswa.

The \$25 million solar project has garnered praise from elected and other public officials for its vision in advancing conservation, renewable energy and energy security goals within a public-private framework. The project allows significant progress toward Department of Defense sustainable energy goals for Camp Ripley and aligns with Minnesota Power's balanced EnergyForward power supply strategy. It also secures one-third of the solar energy Minnesota Power needs to meet the state of Minnesota's solar energy requirement.

