

A Closer Look at the John L. Hennessy Awards



The John L. Hennessy Awards, given to honor the finest in Air Force Food Service excellence, will be presented on Saturday, May 16, 2009, at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers.

Established in 1957, the awards are named for the late John L. Hennessy, a hotel and restaurant executive who led a special Hoover Commission task group to improve military food service. They are the oldest military foodservice awards.

For 53 years the Air Force has partnered with industry leaders using a unique evaluation process, exchanging ideas on how to improve overall food and hospitality operations. The Hennessy Travelers Association (HTA) is an alumni organization of past travelers from the National Restaurant Association (NRA), the Society for Foodservice Management (SFM), the International Food Service Executives Association (IFSEA) and Headquarters Air Force (HQ USAF) staffs. Industry travelers have also learned many employee ideas and concepts seen during their evaluation process back into their own commercial operations.

The HTA also is a unique organization, forming a nonprofit Educational Foundation to assist military foodservice professionals. Annually the HTAEF hosts weeklong on-site signature educational events in conjunction with the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) and supporting industry sponsors. Those attending military foodservice professionals who are recognized as part of the Hennessy Award evaluation process rave about these events and are eager to learn so much more.

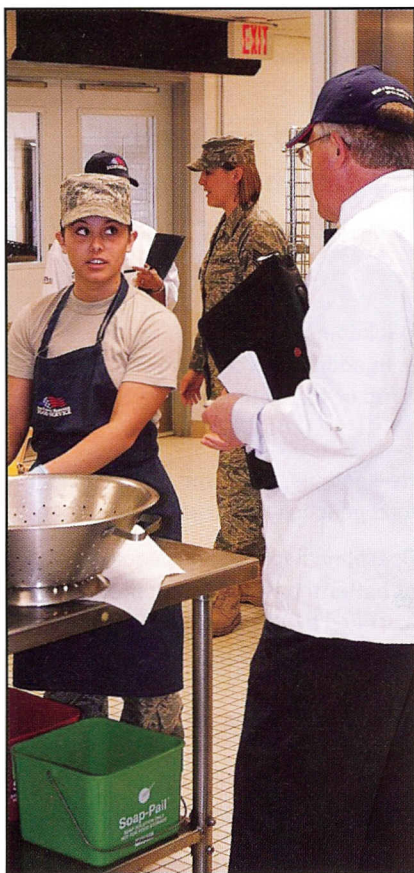
"HTA has charted a mission to open the eyes to military men and women at opportunities, life after the Air Force and act as a conduit, connecting industry looking for quality employees," said Carmen Anthony Vacaleb, HTA president.

"All you have to do as an industry leader is either travel as part of the Hennessy process or attend one of our events with the CIA to witness firsthand the level of interest and excitement that these wonderful men and women have. They serve not only their customers but also their country during their military career. Any corporation, business or small operator would love to have this quality of applicants looking for employment. We are committed to continuing this great relationship."

THE HISTORY OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

A USAF headquarters conference workshop committee, in establishing the guidelines for the Hennessy evaluation, recommended that a committee be formed to ensure the direction and continuity of the program. As a result, a Steering Committee, when selected, would have representation from the Air Force Services Office (AFSO), its major command (Air Force Logistics Command — AFLC), from each of the

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commands that would provide a traveler, HQ USAF/LE (Law Enforcement) and USAF/SG (Surgeon General), and from the three industry foodservice associations participating in the program. The steering committee would meet prior to the evaluations to make recommendations to improve current- and future-year programs, based on input from the major commands (MAJCOMs), the associations and prior travelers. The committee would also provide information and guidance to current-year travelers.

From the beginning, it was thought that there could be no substitute for personal on-site evaluation of a facility to effectively rate the facilities operation and management results. The Steering Committee early on spent much time discussing evaluation concepts that would assure the best and fairest results. While it was agreed that standards for evaluation were necessary to assure uniformity in judging, it was essential that the evaluations must be the result of personal visits. This process was followed except for only one occasion, when early in the program, severe fund limitations and a lack of command understanding prevailed, precluding the final-round visit and resulting in a highly subjective winner decision.

The AF Form 1038, still in use today, is essentially the same as the one developed by the original committee. The relative weight for management operating procedures and regulatory aspects still prevail, although there have been changes in the weight of some elements and some changes in philosophy. The effectiveness and usefulness of the form is shown by the fact that many of the industry travelers have taken the form home with them for use in their own establishments.

The Disney Awards

The SMSgt Kenneth Disney Awards Program was established to a) promote excellence in guest service and meal quality, and b) inspire high morale, motivation, mission support and a professional image through pride and spirited competition.

The Kenneth Disney trophy is an annual Air National Guard award, and is based on the entire scope of an installation's foodservice program exhibiting excellence in management effectiveness, force readiness support, food quality, employee and customer relations, resource conservation, training and safety awareness.

Achieving success in the Kenneth Disney competition is a reflection of pride, commitment and motivation to be the best. The tools of success include superior guest service, astute management, command support of foodservice operations and an attitude to excel. The associations in industry sponsoring are the National Restaurant Association, the Society for Foodservice Management, the International Food Service Executives Association and the Culinary Institute of America.

"We are extremely excited about continuing to serve and grow as the Air Force active duty, guard and reserve forces grow, change and reshape themselves for the future," said Hennessy Travelers Association Secretary/Treasurer Jim Krueger. "They are an extremely important component, and the HTA is fully committed in recognizing their efforts."

2009 Traveling Teams (Evaluators)

Air Force John L. Hennessy Awards:

Single Facility

Capt. Jim Martin, USAF
HQ Air Force Services Agency, San Antonio, Texas

Senior Master Sgt. Richard Scott, USAF
HQ Air Force Services Agency, San Antonio, TX

Bob Rice (National Restaurant Association)
President, Goforth & Rice Restaurants,
Portland, Ore.

Art Ritt, CFE
(Society for Foodservice Management, and the
International Food Service Executives Association)
President, A. Ritt Corp., Chicago, Ill.

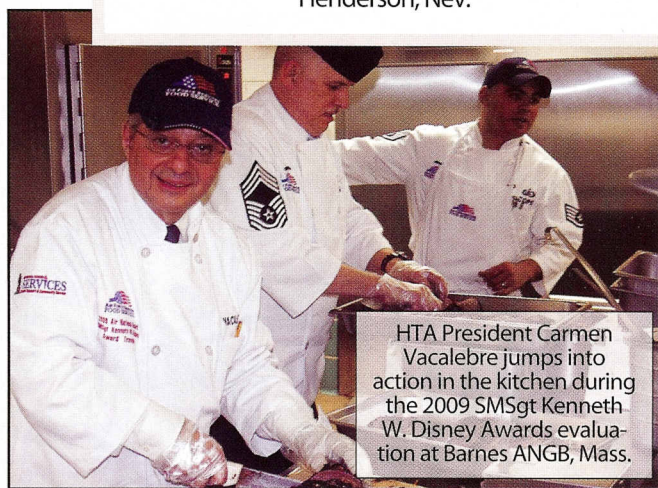
Multiple Facility

Bill Spencer
HQ Air Force Services Agency, San Antonio, Texas

Senior Master Sgt. Troy Miller, USAF
HQ Air Force Services Agency, San Antonio, Texas

Greg Hamer Sr., FMP
(National Restaurant Association)
CEO, B & G Food Enterprises, Inc., Morgan City, La.

Paul Deignan, MCFE, MPS, RD,
(International Food Service Executives Association)
Henderson, Nev.



Senior Master Sgt. Kenneth Wayne Disney, USAF, was the services superintendent at McGhee-Tyson ANGB, Tenn., for more than 20 years. He was first assigned to food service in the Guard in 1967. His superior managerial skills and dedication to providing top-level food services netted the 134th an unbeatable reputation in the Air National Guard. Among the awards he won were the Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal and National Defense Service Medal. He died at age 50 in an on-base car crash in 1992.



Evaluators and workers sit down for the taste testing while evaluating the 104th Fighter Wing for the 2009 SMSgt Kenneth W. Disney Awards.

In Their Own Words

The following are some thoughts from Hennessy Travelers Association (HTA) travelers after their evaluations for the Air Force John L. Hennessy Awards and Air National Guard SMSgt. Kenneth W. Disney Awards:

I feel very honored to have been selected by IFSEA to represent the society as their representative to the Hennessy Award Multiple-Facility Evaluation Team, which included two other highly competent USAF representatives and a very business-savvy member of the National Restaurant Association (NRA) board of directors. We made a very compatible, capable and fair-minded team.

Constantly and consistently we witnessed evidence in the detail of a "pursuit for excellence" in the performance and products provided. Education was the backbone to everything. Judging was difficult because of the commitment to customer satisfaction as seen throughout the facilities and the wide variety of menu offerings. But most obvious was the "welcoming attitude" demonstrated to fellow workers and customers.

As an individual, the incorporation of National Institute for the Severely Handicapped (NISH) disabled workers into meaningful work experiences is something the public needs to know. I took away from the experience that having a similar program of "Quality Evaluation and Recognition" was possible for my industry — the healthcare foodservice industry — and that such a program is necessary to identify the "role modeler" for potential and excellence in an organization.

— Paul Deignan, MCFE, MPS, RD
International Food Service Executives
Association (IFSEA), Henderson, Nev.

When you see generals, colonels and senior civilians attending ice breakers and in-briefs, participating in any way they can pushing their troops forward to be recognized, you know they care and the foodservice mission is important. The Air Force and the Air National Guard are extremely proud of taking care of the troops, and Air Force Food Service is mission critical. Simply put, if it's not right, it's a game changer directly impacting the mission. The Air Force and Air National Guard are uniquely partnered to meet demanding missions both home and abroad. Amazingly similar is our own National Restaurant Association, a global entity and all of our state restaurant associations that work as partners within each state. Each is dependent upon the other supporting a common mission; you can see the partnership between the Air National Guard and the active-duty Air Force.

— Bill Baker
National Restaurant Association
Vice President, Hennessy Travelers Association
CEO, Baker Management Group, Hellertown, Penn.

2009 Traveling Teams (Evaluators)

SMSgt. Kenneth W. Disney Awards:

Nick Ebert (ANG)
HQ Air National Guard Bureau, Washington, D.C.

Senior Master Sgt. Jim Stogdill, ANG
HQ Air National Guard Bureau, Washington, D.C.

Master Sgt. Angela Napierala, ANG
HQ Air National Guard Bureau, Washington, D.C.

Master Sgt Edward Walden, ANG
HQ Air National Guard Bureau, Washington, D.C.

Carmen Anthony Vacalebri, FMP
(National Restaurant Association)
President, Hennessy Travelers Association
CEO, Carmen Anthony Restaurant Group,
Waterbury, Conn.

Bill Baker (National Restaurant Association)
Vice President, Hennessy Travelers Association
CEO, Baker Management Group, Hellertown, Pa.



I feel extremely proud as a board member of the National Restaurant Association to be a part of a continuing partnership with the military as an industry owner and operator. We believe that this is the longest known relationship of its kind, industry partnering with the military to not only assist, but also learn. We have the awesome opportunity to see firsthand these young men and women serving their customers and country. I know I speak for my entire board when I say that this is a unique privilege and opportunity that every American should volunteer for. Extending a hand of thanks and hopefully a hand that guides this talent pool into industry in the future is the right thing to do. God Bless America for such valuable resources!

— Carmen Anthony Vacalebri, FMP
National Restaurant Association
President, Hennessy Travelers Association
CEO, Carmen Anthony Restaurant Group,
Waterbury, Conn.

HTA Award of Excellence

The Hennessy Travelers' Association (HTA) award of excellence is determined each year by Hennessy evaluators on both the single- and multiple-facility teams. Each team selects an Air Force foodservice professional who exemplifies the highest standards of professionalism, attitude and culinary skill as the recipient of the award of excellence.

HTA nominees for the single-facility category are: Staff Sgt. Nicole Palermo, Dyess AFB, Texas; Senior Airman Angel Ramirez, Elmendorf AFB, Alaska; Airman 1st Class Bryant Davis, Scott AFB, Ill.; and Airman 1st Class Ciara Horn, Tyndall AFB, Fla.

HTA nominees for the multiple-facility category are: Staff Sgt. Wendell Bowles, Eglin AFB, Fla.; Airman 1st Class Cal Alexandra Burgeson, Fairchild AFB, Wash.; Senior Airman Tamie Murdock, Misawa AB, Japan; Airman 1st Class Allison Gholdston, Nellis AFB, Nev.; and Senior Airman Gary Adamoyurka, Ramstein AB, Germany. The winners will be announced at the Air Force Hennessy Awards Ceremony on Saturday, May 16, 2009, in Chicago, Ill.



The HTA award of excellence is given to the Air Force foodservice professional who exemplifies the highest standards of professionalism, attitude and culinary skill.

***Please visit the Hennessy Travelers Association
Educational Foundation at booth #6048 at the NRA Show***