

HTA Aims to Repeat Success at Greystone

The Hennessy Travelers Association (HTA) recently announced permanent plans to annually recognize the "best of the best" in Air Force Food Service. The HTA will do this through continuing educational seminars for the men and women currently serving as culinary specialists with the Air Force. The association has been instrumental in organizing educational events and seeking corporate sponsorship to support goals.

"We have been so thankful to find corporations and individuals with a will to give, supporting our programs," said Carmen Anthony Vacalebri, HTA president and National Restaurant Association (NRA) and NRA Educational Foundation (NRAEF) board member. "Our Greystone program, in conjunction with the Culinary Institute of America (CIA), was a huge success. Fifty of the Air Force's finest chefs underwent a week of intense hands-on culinary training and attended classroom lecture seminars."

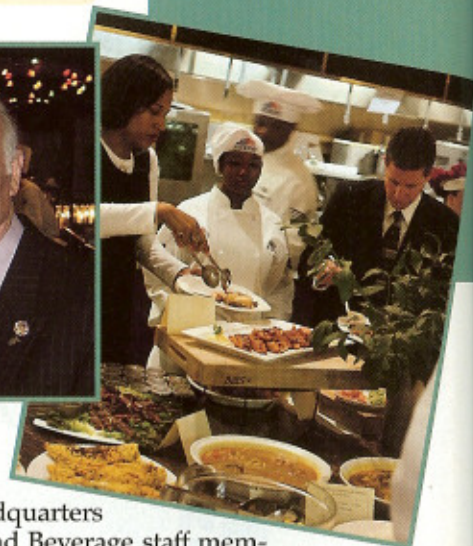
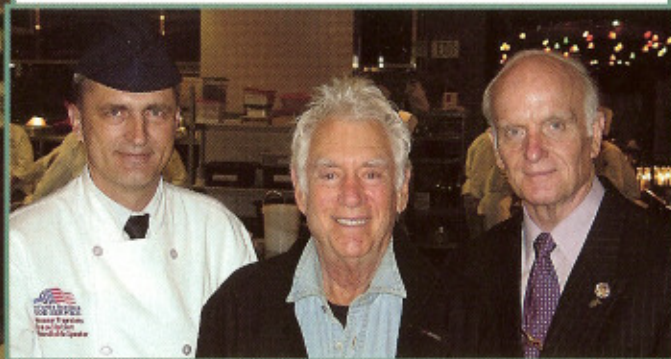
He continued, "*Government Food Service* magazine was also on-site, capturing the event, and attended the culmination of the week, a CEO roundtable where 15 top executives spent the day with the newly energized 'Class of 50.'"

Jim Krueger, HTA's secretary and treasurer, added, "Our week would not have been possible if it wasn't for key corporations graciously sponsoring attendees. We knew once industry had an opportunity to see what they supported, their hearts would be touched by what they had done. *Government Food Service* supported us by highlighting those events in a special 25-page feature that was released with the timing of the 2007 NRA show in May." The HTA continues to receive praise and queries as to when the next event will be scheduled.

Future plans are now in place to conduct an annual event similar to the highly successful CIA Greystone campus event. Each year, the HTA will travel as part of



Hennessy Happenings



the John L. Hennessy awards program and identify key nominees who are eligible for an overall Air Force-level award. All of the nominees will attend award ceremonies in Chicago, where other award announcements will be released the Friday evening before the John L. Hennessy awards breakfast, (see *Foodservice Awards*, page 40). Those nominees from the active-duty guard and reserve Air Force Hennessy programs will make up the annual body for the HTA Education Foundation's project.

"It's the natural and right thing to do," Vacalebre commented. "Our country is at war, globally, fighting terrorism and those who want to threaten our well-being. These young men and women are serving their customers around the world, 24/7. We want the HTA to be a bridge; a conduit to industry. Any corporation would love to get their hands on these top-notch featured super employees. We will continue to assist those in uniform, and educate industry on their value, life after the Air Force."

The HTA is an alumni organization of past John L. Hennessy Awards travelers, industry and Headquarters Air Force professionals who have traveled around the world to evaluate Air Force foodservice operations. Annually each May, in conjunction with the NRA Hotel-Motel Show in Chicago, the HTA assists in recognizing excellence for active-duty, guard and reserve Air Force Food Service professionals. HTA members have roots from their respective associations — the NRA, the Society for Foodservice Management (SFM), the International Food Service Executives Association

(IFSEA) and Headquarters Air Force Food and Beverage staff members. Each part of these associations provides members for the annual traveling teams. This program first started in 1957 and has continued annually since.

In 2006, in conjunction with the 50th anniversary celebration of the John L. Hennessy awards, the HTA took on the major project of establishing the HTA Educational Foundation. Under the leadership of then NRA Chairman of the Board and 2005 HTA traveler, Ed Tinsley, and Russ Benson, then SFM president, an initiative to provide Air Force Food Service professionals an opportunity to see where their careers could go, life after the Air Force, was born. After well over a year of planning, fundraising and hard work, that vision came together in February 2007 with the CIA Greystone project. That highly successful endeavor has provided the HTA with the spirit of doing more, now with the establishment of an annual project.

The NRA helped establish the Hennessy Awards in 1957 as an outgrowth of the Hoover Commission. Congress created the Hoover Commission in 1947 to improve the efficiency of government agencies, seeking functional experts from private industry to aid the government in its redesign. One of the Hoover Commission's tasks was to improve feeding programs for servicemen and women. The commission recommended the creation of an annual competition among military foodservice operations, which led to the first service award programs. Each service has an awards program, but the John L. Hennessy program is the only one named after one of the industry experts who had the vision of such awards programs. The program is named for John L. Hennessy, a Stouffer Hospitality Group executive who served on the Hoover Commission. The HTA has been a part of the Hennessy process since its inception. In 1984, the HTA formally started recognizing individuals who stood out during their evaluation tours. These individuals impressed the team with leadership, culinary skills and motivated their food team to success.

For more information on how to get involved and support the HTA's initiatives, contact the HTA at www.HennessyAward.org.



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