

A REWARDING EXPERIENCE



Crawford

Foodservice teams selected as winners of the John L. Hennessy Award undergo a thorough evaluation by teams of experts who are committed to recognizing culinary skills and improving program quality.

Evaluation teams judge competitors on criteria ranging from food quality to kitchen operations; serving and dining operations; training, personnel and readiness; sanitation and repair maintenance; and management.

An important aspect is the Hennessy Awards process raises the esteem of Air Force foodservice personnel and the role they play in maintaining high morale.

“Meeting with the dedicated professionals who provide sustenance to our airmen provided a venue to increase awareness of their professional opportunities for growth, share insights from the private sector and most importantly to thank them for their service to our nation,” said Dick Crawford, vice president government relations (retired) McDonalds Corp.

“The [Hennessy Travelers Association] provides a vehicle for all of us

in food service to both ‘give back’ to our society and for personal growth,” Crawford said.

Getting word out about the skill and work being done in challenging conditions motivated Rob Geile, director, Hobart Consulting Services, Hobart-Traulsen Corp.

“I promised those at each base that I would share their ‘story’ with my personal and professional friends when I completed my travels, and I continue to do just that,” said Geile. “Being a Hennessy Traveler was an honor.”

TRAVELING

Spread out over weeks, the process of selecting Hennessy winners is intense, with extensive travel required to visit military bases and evaluate the foodservice teams. “Evaluating the global foodservice operations of our Air Force as a Hennessy Traveler was both an intellectual feast and physically exhausting,” Crawford said.

Rewards make the experience worthwhile. Travelers gain an appreciation for the sacrifice made by service members in service to the country as well as for the teams and the essential role they play in contributing to troop morale.

“The trip allowed me to truly appreciate what the Air Force does to serve our great country. The foodservice operations were first class in every way, and made our task of evaluating them extremely difficult, but the evaluation form (AF1038) provided the perfect tool for guiding us,” Geile said. “I want to thank SFM for selecting me to represent them on the team, and my teammates for being great travel partners.”

EVALUATION

Not only has the Hennessy program evolved in the 54 years since it began, but the evaluation process has undergone steady updating as well. Still Air Force Form 1038 remains the basic Hennessy evaluation checklist used today and the test that participants are trying to perfect.

Not only is Air Force Form 1038 is still in use, but it is essentially unchanged from the one developed by the original committee. Relative weight for management operating procedures and regulatory aspects remain although some changes were made to the weight of some elements and philosophy.

The Headquarters USAF conference workshop committee established guidelines for the evaluation and recommended a subcommittee be formed to ensure the direction and continuity. With representation from each command



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TRAVELERS CONTRIBUTE TO RAISING SKILLS AND AWARENESS



providing a traveler, the steering committee would meet prior to the evaluations to make recommendations to improve current future programs. The committee would also provide information and guidance to the current year travelers.

STANDARDS

Beginning with the idea that there is no substitute for personal on-site evaluation of a facility to rate facility operation and management results, the committee agreed that standards for evaluation were necessary to ensure uniformity in judging and that evaluations require personal visits.

When the program originated, the Air Force had a large number of forces overseas, including several major air commands located outside the U.S. The forces were grouped into three



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HENNESSY AWARD WINNERS

areas (Pacific, European and continental United States), which would be evaluated and the best of these revisited to determine a winner, first runner-up and a second runner-up.

Later, the geographical system was replaced, and the evaluation criteria became installations having one facility and those having more than one.

Since then, special categories and awards were established to suit peculiar and/or non-recurring situations. Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard Recognition, introduced in 1980, and the Air National Guard, begun in 1988, were added to coordinate schedules better with the annual Hennessy evaluation trips. Air National Guard had a large



and small category until 1991, when one overall winner was selected. Both programs continue, and are evolving with their own unique trophies, presentations and awards. Both are recognized during the Chicago award programs.

European Small Site Award, started in 2001 at the request of Headquarters, U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) to highlight the efforts of these isolated locations scattered throughout Europe as the footprint of the Air Force presence drew down after the Cold War. Evaluation is internal to the HQ USAFE staff. Awards are presented during the Friday evening Air Force awards ceremony.

TRAVELING TEAMS

Originally, Hennessy evaluations were spread over three regions (Pacific, European and continental United States), and the traveling teams comprised an industry representative, a person selected from the major commands (on a rotating basis) and an Air Force member.

Later, evaluation shifted away from three teams, each assigned to a designated geographic area, and that made participation by major commands more complicated. The change also meant there were three industry representatives for only two teams. The National Restaurant Association offered to provide an additional traveler, which balanced each team composition with two from industry and one from the Air Force.



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Each participating association selects its representatives according to different criteria. NRA representatives are volunteers recruited from the board of directors and approved by the current NRA president, who makes the selection. International Food Service Executives Association (IFSEA) volunteers who travel

on one of the Armed Forces evaluations select the service team on which they would like to serve, but are reviewed by a committee, which makes recommendations for the president's appointment. Society for Foodservice Management volunteers are selected from the board of directors. The Air Force supplies two travelers: the first is an officer or civilian representative who acts in a dual role as an evaluator as well as a team/ chief coordinator. A coordinator is responsible for relations with travelers, itinerary development, contact with the major commands and in presentation ceremony planning and arrangement. The second is a senior enlisted functional representative who is the "crew chief," or behind-the-scenes nuts-and-bolts expert in Air Force foodservice operations.

Each association is asked to have a backup in the event of an emergency.

NRA members are primarily drawn from the owner/manager level of food-

service operations from small independents to large chains and represent the entrepreneurial aspect of food service, where customer service and customer satisfaction are paramount.

The Society for Foodservice Management provides management and quality evaluation necessary to a commercial operation.

IFSEA contributes operational expertise from chiefs, stewards, bakers, etc.

THE ASSOCIATION

Individuals selected by each evaluation team are recognized at the Hennessy Trophy Awards Ceremony and receive a scholarship that can be used toward continuing industry education and career advancement.

Further, the Hennessy Travelers Association assists bases requesting assistance to improve their foodservice operation by arranging visits from past travelers.

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