

# Shaping the Future of Navy Food Service



Wilson

**Cmdr. Scott Wilson, SC, USN, Director of Navy Food Service, Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP)**

**Government Food Service:** Tell us about yourself and how you came to be director of the Navy food service program. Discuss how your first year is going and your goals as director of program.

**Cmdr. Scott Wilson:** I assumed the position as director of Navy Food Service when my co-worker and predecessor got selected for an operational afloat assignment. It was great news for both of us; a career milestone for him and a great opportunity for me! Little did I know of the challenge and complexity of Navy Food Service. Who says food service isn't rocket science? There are lots of moving parts, err ships (boats for you submariners), which operate across the globe, in challenging environments and varying supply chains.

Due to the nature of our business, sailors are constantly subjected to a stressful and demanding work environment. Nutrition, health and wellness

are more critical than ever. Our challenge is to educate ourselves on the science behind human performance and equip our sailors with the knowledge and provisions to sustain peak performance during challenging times. With an emphasis on education and training, my goal is to help shape the future of Navy Food Service.

There's a section in one of my favorite books, "Outliers" by Malcom Gladwell, which talks about the 10,000-hour rule. Through his research, Gladwell states that it takes roughly 10,000 hours of "deliberate practice" to achieve mastery in a field. Think about that. It can take years to be considered a "professional" in one's trade. We need to train how we fight. Proficiency requires repetition!

**Government Food Service:** The Tactical Advances for the Next Generation (TANG) event in 2016 developed ideas to modernize the dining experience in galleys afloat and ashore. Update us on the initiatives that were awaiting contract selection and

Culinary Specialist 1st Class Devon Vigil inspects fresh produce aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Donald Cook (DDG 75). (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Theron J. Godbold, USN)

Mineman 3rd Class Deon Wilson, left, and Culinary Specialist 1st Class Frederick Cristobal, right, review a recipe card while preparing dinner for the crew aboard the Avenger-class mine countermeasures ship USS Chief (MCM 14). (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jordan Crouch, USN.)





Culinary Specialist 3rd Class Ashley Bailey cuts green bell peppers in the galley aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Boxer (LHD 4). (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jose Jaen, USN)

*approval: Human Performance Self-Service Kiosk and Application; Food Service Integrated Barcode and Inventory Management System; Culinary Food Service Support Platform; and any others.*

**Wilson:** At the time of print in last year's issue (March 2017), we had received funding approval from the Office of Naval Research and were awaiting contract selection and approval via the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. The SBIR process is broken down into three phases. In July of 2017, we awarded contracts to six companies, two per each project, which initiated phase I. Phase I establishes the technical merit, feasibility and commercial potential of the proposed R&D efforts, and determines the quality performance of the small business awardee organization prior to providing further federal support in Phase II. Over the six-month period of performance, we monitored progress, which included site visits, proof of concept demonstrations, stakeholder outreach and regular team meetings. Phase I contracts terminated in December 2017. In January 2018, we will select one company per project and transition to phase II. The objective of phase II is to continue the R&D efforts initiated in phase I. Periods of performance for these contracts are typically 18 months in duration. Phase III, where appropriate, is for the small business to pursue commercialization objectives resulting from the phase I/II R&D activities. The SBIR program does not fund phase III. Phase III may involve follow-on non-SBIR funded R&D or production contracts for products, processes or services intended for use by the U.S. government.

**Government Food Service:** *Another outcome of the TANG meeting was to standardize galley equipment to streamline training and maximize savings. Would you update us on how this is progressing?*

**Wilson:** The implementation of TANG initiatives will take time (years); however, we continue to work closely

with our partners to make advancements when/where we can. Currently, NAVSUP and CNIC are working the acquisition of a new mobile-restaurant vehicle for NAS Lemoore, Calif. This mobile galley will increase the availability of healthy food options in close proximity to a sailor's workplace.

Eliminating the time spent by sailors transiting to/from the workplace to eat is an easy cost savings to the Navy. The mobile galley will also provide a platform for culinarians to practice and hone their skills on Navy standard equipment. The Streamline of Training Initiative is being pursued via the ongoing Culinary Support Platform project mentioned above.

**Government Food Service:** *In responses to last year's Commander's Update, it looks like Navy Food Service Analysis Tool software was updated. Would you tell us about how the Navy uses its new capability and benefits from the data collected?*

**Wilson:** The NFSAT software is ready for beta testing with operating forces and Military Sealift Command (MSC) assets. Testing is scheduled for the second half of fiscal year 2018.

The NFSAT will evaluate size requirements on food orders before purchase to ensure there is space available for the items within ship storerooms. The Naval Sea Systems Command will also use Navy Standard Core Menu (NSCM) size requirements to plan space and weight considerations for new construction ships.

**Government Food Service:** *Explain the difference between the Navy Food Service Analysis Tool and the Navy Food Service Management program. What does each contribute and how does the Navy utilize the two together?*

**Wilson:** The NFSAT identifies subsistence provisions space requirements to store dry, chill and freeze onboard ships. Ship spaces are constrained and optimizing available storage increases efficiency and improves ship readiness.

The Food Service Management (FSM) automation system provides food-order quantities, pack sizes and dimensional data required for the NFSAT to calculate the space required for orders and the NSCM as required for pre-deployment load outs.

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FSM is the entire business automation tool for food service orders, receipts, menu planning and reconciliations. NFSAT is a space optimization tool that allows ships and their supporting TYCOMs (Type Commands) to adjust order quantities or modify the entire NSCM during fleet-wide semi-annual reviews.

**Government Food Service:** *How important is training for Navy culinary specialists? Talk about the different training opportunities available.*

**Wilson:** We highly value training and the professional development of our culinary specialists. Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) Fleet Logistics Centers, along with the Navy Food Management Teams (NFMT), continue to provide relevant, quality training in all areas of food service.

Annual training opportunities for our culinary specialists include:

- Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training event held at Fort Lee, Va.
- Military Culinary Arts Competitive Training event held at Wiltshire, United Kingdom.
- Army vs. Navy Cook-off at the Pennsylvania Farm Show.
- Yokosuka Chopped, an organized-cooking competition event sponsored by Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan, Galley and MWR, which is aligned with Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka's Captain's Cup event.
- Culinary Championship in Great Lakes, Ill.
- Numerous fleet Chopped and Iron Chef Competitions on board Navy ships and submarines, which provide additional opportunities for hands-on training.

**Government Food Service:** *The Navy finished implementing the Go for Green nutrition education program and saltshaker symbol for sodium content last year. Has anything been learned from using it the past year or so, and are any changes or revisions being planned to improve it or raise its effectiveness?*

Culinary Specialist 3rd Class Tiara Johnson places jalapeño cornbread mix on baking sheet in the galley aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Boxer (LHD 4). (Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jose Jaen, USN)

**Wilson:** Since the rollout of Go For Green (G4G) in January 2016, the fleet recognizes a parallel with the CNIC nutrition and fitness program Navy Operational Fitness and Fueling System (NOFFS). Both nutrition campaigns promote color-coding as the guide for selecting the high- (green), moderate- (yellow) and low- (red) performance foods. G4G uses green, yellow and red food labels at the serving line to influence sailor choice, and NOFFS uses food lists and categorizes foods as green, yellow or red. The programs complement each other, as well as reinforce the emphasis that collaboratively, Navy Food Service and CNIC Navy Fitness are committed to promote the overall health and wellness of our service members. A revision/update is scheduled for 2020.

**Government Food Service:** *What are plans for the Navy Ney Awards in 2018? When will evaluations be done and when are winners going to be announced?*

**Wilson:** In October 2017, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet and Commander, Navy Installations Command recommended 18 Capt. Edward F. Ney Memorial Award finalists to NAVSUP. Since that time, evaluators have been around the world to identify the best of the best for 2018 and to provide their recommendations as to who should earn the recognition as a Capt. Edward F. Ney Memorial Awards winner. Personnel from the winning galleys will participate in an award ceremony May 2018. Trophy bowls will be presented to the winning commands, and culinary training will be provided during the Ney event. Winning commands will also have the opportunity to receive culinary training at the Culinary Institute of America at Greystone in the summer of 2018.

**Government Food Service:** *Is there anything you can tell us about response to last year's joint awards presentation at NRA, including the training program. How many sailors were involved? Are any other training opportunities planned for 2018?*

Culinary Specialist Seaman Artem Kucherenko glazes pies while preparing a meal for sailors aboard the USS George Washington (CVN 73) in celebration of the Navy's 242nd birthday.



**Wilson:** Last year, 40 sailors participated from various commands throughout the Navy. There were also participants from the other services who were recognized for their respective culinary awards. It was only fitting that the NRA incorporated the joint culinary award winners as part of the overall training program. Over three days, the NRA tested the services' ability to work with one another as a team. Each team spent two days at Kendall College in Chicago learning about Go for Green, dining concept development and the presentation of a business plan to a panel of industry professionals for critique.

Culinary winners also received advanced training from three of the top chef instructors at the Culinary Institute of America School at Greystone. The training consisted of basic knife-handling skills, basic knife cuts, nutritional menu drafting and taste-testing techniques. Participants also learned about flavors of the world, olive oils, salts, and cooking for the seasons.

**Government Food Service:** *Has Navy Food Service been influenced by or implemented any of the dining facility design ideas presented during the three-day NRA training program in its galley operations?*

**Wilson:** The advanced training provided by the NRA is always a huge success amongst the sailors, and dining facility design is one area that is quite popular with the current generation. With the continuous advancements in technology and an evolving customer base, galley design has become a focus area for the Navy.

Navy's partnership with Johns Hopkins University in the development of TANG healthy innovative eating initiatives addressed this need. Improvements to dining

facility infrastructure, incorporating state-of-the-art technology, innovative food service equipment, and a trendy exterior/interior re-design are areas we want to leverage to encourage patronage and healthy eating styles. Some improvements would include galley lounge makeovers with Wi-Fi, multi-purpose seating, TVs, music, coffee/tea bars, and other amenities to create a more desirable customer experience. Our greatest challenge is that modernizing a galley takes time and money. Over the next couple of years, and as funding becomes available, improvements will continue.

**Government Food Service:** *Is there anything else about the Navy Food Service program that you'd like to add?*

**Wilson:** Yes. These young men and women are the real deal! I've been exposed to the plethora of talent across the Navy via the numerous avenues that showcase their achievements: schoolhouse training, culinary competitions, Ney award winners, etc. Their successes are also recognized internationally. Two thousand and seventeen marked the fourth year the United States Navy accepted and participated in the Royal Navy's Culinary Competition. Six culinary specialist competitors from across the Navy traveled to the United Kingdom in September to train and collaborate with the Royal Navy for their annual Exercise Joint Caterer Culinary Competition. The team was highly successful, bringing home three "Best in Show," two Gold, five Silver and four Bronze medals in various categories. CS1 Frida Karani also took home the coveted Senior Grand Prix Armed Forces Chef of the Year award. She is the first female and second American to win this coveted title. Congratulations CS1 Karani!

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