



# NEWS RELEASE

## Defense Commissary Agency

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## DeCA announces outreach award winners

*By DeCA corporate communications*

**FORT LEE, Va.** – Defense Commissary Agency officials recognized seven commissaries for outstanding outreach May 20 during the agency’s 2009 Conference and Training Event in Richmond, Va.

The winning commissaries are Fort Carson, Colo. (best outreach to retirees); Camp Lejeune, N.C. (best outreach to new recruits and schools); Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. (best outreach to Guard and Reserve); Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas (best outreach to E1-E6, continental United States); Misawa Air Base, Japan (best outreach to E1-E6, overseas); Camp Pendleton, Calif. (best outreach to military families and spouses, continental United States); and Kadena Air Base, Japan (best outreach to military families and spouses, overseas).

Zone managers who oversee operations of the winning commissaries accepted the awards from Philip E. Sakowitz Jr., DeCA director and CEO. “The best outreach efforts tend to echo great relationships between the stores and the military communities they serve,” Sakowitz said. “The DeCA team members involved in these outreach events have gone above and beyond our mandate to help spread the news about this benefit. Congratulations to the winning stores!”

Each year for the past six years DeCA has held an Outreach Challenge in which commissaries compete for most originality and creativity in marketing the benefit. The challenge encourages commissaries to reach out to authorized shoppers who may not be using their commissary benefit, or who may not be using it regularly, and provides a unique opportunity for store directors worldwide to share their best outreach practices with others and to strengthen the

commissary benefit.

This year's theme was "The Commissary – It's Worth the Trip!" which emphasized a targeted approach to outreach and marketing to military families, spouses and retirees, with a special focus on key demographic groups such as young, single service members and the Guard and Reserve. The theme encouraged commissary employees to think nontraditionally in their approach to outreach, during this time of tight budgets and time constraints.

Commissaries entering the competition submitted packages that documented their best outreach efforts over the previous year. Entries were judged on originality and creativity of outreach strategy, effectiveness in reaching intended audiences, and results.

**- DeCA-**

**About DeCA:** *The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones. Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings worth about \$3,400 annually for a family of four. A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America's military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.*