



NEWS RELEASE

Defense Commissary Agency

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DeCA employees are ‘Active Your Way’

*By Lt. Col. Karen E. Hawkins,
DeCA dietitian*

FORT LEE, Va. – Employees of the Defense Commissary Agency were on the move from May through July with more than 4,800 people being physically active in the President’s Challenge. DeCA employees participated as part of the agency’s “Eat Healthy and Be Active Your Way” campaign. Their sweat and sore bodies represented an important step that Americans should take to improve their health according to the new Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.

Participation in the challenge was a natural for commissary employees who wanted to improve their personal health and show their commitment to promoting physical activity for members of the military community, said DeCA Director and CEO Philip E. Sakowitz Jr.

“We participated by being active and invited our customers to join the challenge,” Sakowitz said. “This included several walk/run events, walking groups at lunchtime and breaks, along with many employees participating in fitness classes at installation recreation facilities. Our people have shared how much they have enjoyed the activity along with having more motivation to continue being active beyond the challenge. This has been a very successful program for our employees.”

For Andrea Coyle, a commissary management specialist with DeCA East and one of the DeCA employees who participated in the President's Challenge, being physically active was easy thanks to a little motivation from her fellow store associates. "I've wanted to boost my physical activity since April," she said, "and with the involvement of my co-workers in the 'President's Challenge' I found extra support to do it."

All of the participants are recognized as winners in the challenge due to being active on a regular basis and will receive a certificate of completion signed by the agency director. DeCA is recognized for being active in the challenge in the following order of participation:

- First place, DeCA East
- Second place, DeCA West
- Third place, DeCA Europe
- Honorable mention, DeCA headquarters

For more information about making healthy choices, visit Ask the Dietitian on <http://www.commissaries.com> and post your questions on the DeCA Dietitian Forum. Be sure to look for other useful information in the Dietitian's Voice archive. Sign up with the DeCA Dietitian on www.twitter.com and get messages sent to your cell phone today. For delicious recipes, check out Kay's Kitchen. And to enjoy all your commissary has to offer, sign up for the *Commissary Connection*.

- 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.*