



NEWS RELEASE

Defense Commissary Agency

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DeCA announces outreach award winners

By DeCA office of communication

FORT LEE, Va. – Defense Commissary Agency officials recognized commissaries worldwide for outstanding customer outreach June 9 during the agency’s 2010 Conference and Training Event in Atlanta, Ga.

Store directors were spotlighted for their commissaries’ superior achievements in fiscal 2009 for the agency’s annual Outreach Challenge and, for the first year, in their support of Guard and Reserve on-site sales.

The winning commissaries for the Outreach Challenge are:

- Best Outreach to Retirees – **Tinker Air Force Base Commissary, Okla.**
- Best Outreach to New Recruits and Schools – **Sheppard Air Force Base Commissary, Texas**
- Best Outreach to Guard and Reserve – **Fort Leavenworth Commissary, Kan.**
- Best Outreach to E1-E6 in the Continental United States – **Nellis Air Force Base Commissary, Nev.**
- Best Outreach to E1-E6, Overseas – the award is shared by **Ramstein Air Base Commissary, Germany** and **Marine Corps Base Camp Courtney Commissary, Okinawa, Japan.**
- Best Outreach to Military Families and Spouses, Continental United States – **Fort Riley Commissary, Kan.**
- Best Outreach to Military Families and Spouses, Overseas – **U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan Commissary, South Korea**

Store directors of the winning commissaries accepted the awards from Philip E. Sakowitz Jr., DeCA director and CEO. “When we say, ‘We make it worth the trip,’ we are paying tribute to our dedicated store personnel and industry partners who are engaged spreading the message about this wonderful commissary benefit,” he said. “These winners represent the best of the best when it comes to customer outreach.”

The winners of the Guard and Reserve On-site Sales Awards are:

- **Small Store category** – (three-way tie) – Columbus Air Force Base Commissary, Miss.; Malmstrom Air Force Base Commissary, Mont.; and Naval Air Station Meridian Commissary, Miss.
- **Large Store category** – Fort Gillem Commissary, Ga. (this store conducted eight on-site sale events)
- **Superstore category** – Pearl Harbor Commissary, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii

“The efforts of our people in the stores resulted in bringing a mini-commissary to deserving customers that do not live close enough to a commissary to shop routinely,” Sakowitz said. “Many of these sales were in states that do not have a commissary at all. What a success story!”

For the past seven 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 “We Make it 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.

The agency’s newest outreach competition, the Guard and Reserve On-site Sales Awards, recognizes stores that supported Guard and Reserve military members and their families at locations at least 50 miles from a “brick and mortar” commissary. Last year, commissaries conducted 165 on-site sale events, reaching 83,000 customers and generating \$4.1 million in savings.

“It was an honor for me to help recognize these outreach achievements and the amazing commissaries that made them happen for our customers,” Sakowitz said.

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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 \$3,300 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.*