Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) Director of Navy Food Service Cmdr. Danny W. King, SC, USN, set ambitious goals for the Navy Food Service team in 2012: to transform Navy Food Service by increasing culinary specialist training, improving menus and adding more over-the-shoulder support to our culinary teams. These goals were established following guidance from NAVSUP Commander and Chief of Supply Corps Rear Adm. Mark Heinrich, USN, resulting from a Navy Food Service update brief to Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Jonathan W. Greenert in late 2011.

“It was truly the highlight of my career to be able to stand alongside the Chief of Supply Corps as he laid out the Navy’s vision to improve Navy Food Service in an update to the CNO,” King said. “Approximately five minutes into the brief the CNO commented that he believes there are a lot of great stories happening each and every day in Navy Food Service, and he wants the stories told.”

The discussions with the CNO focused on specific goals that would have an immediate and long-standing improvement for both the culinary specialist working in the galleys, as well as the customer — Navy sailors. The CNO emphasized the priority of the Navy Standard Core Menu (NSCM), in-rate training and culinary specialist Manning, King indicated.

“I was both humbled and energized by the sincere and unwavering support by the CNO to improve the professional development of the CS community and the products served to the fleet,” King said.

“At the start of 2012, I don’t think anyone imagined us being under the fiscal constraints that we are experiencing now. As fortune would have it, one of the highlights of our Navy Food Service Team’s accomplishments in 2012 was that we were able to establish plans for an improved menu that would add no additional cost to the taxpayer, by aligning with all of our stakeholders that included Defense Logistics Agency Troop Support (DLA-TS), Commander Fleet Forces Command (CFFC), Commander Pacific Fleet Command (PACOM), Commander Naval Air Forces Command (AIRFOR), Commander Surface Forces Command (SURFOR), Commander Submarine Force Command (SUBFOR), Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC), Commander Navy Personnel Command (CNP), Commander Navy
In 2012, the Navy operated 302 galleys afloat and ashore, with 6,011 culinary specialists and 56 foodservice chief warrant officers serving more than 92 million meals and operating with an SIK budget of $427 million. The following summarizes specific accomplishments and ongoing initiatives by Navy Food Service in 2012.

**MENU**

Fleet Type Commanders (TYCOMS), along with NAVSUP, Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) and CFD-Natick Labs, are always testing new recipes and have added nearly 50 new items that will support the 2013 recipe collection. The change in menu reflects direct feedback from the sailors and maintains proper nutritional balance.

"The updated menu not only tastes great, but it also improves the overall quality of galley products fleetwide," King said. "It is important to point out that these recipe and product changes were initiated by the voices of the fleet CSs who were heard by all, including the CNO who gave clear direction to include more scratch cooking and enhance culinary skills of our CSs."

Examples of entrees that are now part of the scratch menu include Yankee Pot Roast, Teriyaki glazed chicken and Cantonese BBQ ribs. In coordination with CFD-Natick Labs, NAVSUP has also introduced a “Bake-with-Less” concept in which CSs are trained to produce fresh pastry and breads. Fleetwide, galleys re-examined their daily schedules, storerooms and level of training, and doubled efforts. The result was an increase in scratch cooking while maintaining full readiness. "Our standing order and benchmark for prepared menu items is that the quality has to be equal to or better than what we can do from scratch. Premade products that clearly stand out as being premade products are a worst-case scenario," King said.
Careful attention was given to ensure that the changes made were a net improvement to the fleet.

“We stressed that menus should not be changed just to show that change occurred, but [our] focus should remain on the customer. High-quality, nutritious food means a warfighter can focus on the mission without distraction,” King said.

This is a true testament that the Navy Standard Core Menu still belongs to the fleet culinary specialist, and it is vital that they get familiar with it, manage it and continue to provide feedback on it through menu advisory boards. Menu advisory boards are now being conducted more often throughout the fleet to include Navy Food Management Teams worldwide holding all hands menu advisory boards once a quarter. Feedback from those board meetings, along with individual command feedback is routed to fleet, TYCOMs and NAVSUP headquarters for review and incorporation into the NSCM.

“We are very fortunate to have Jennifer Person-Whippo on staff, our registered dietitian and nutritionist,” King said. “In keeping with our focus on nutrition, the Navy Food Service nutritionist worked with the Nutritional Aspects of Health Promotion Working Group.”

The group developed DoD Nutrition Acquisition Standards that are incorporated into the Joint Subsistence Policy Board DoD Menu Standards and will be housed in the DoD 1338.10 foodservice document. These standards identify criteria to ensure that nutritious and high-quality food is available to all service members and is in accordance with the 2010 United States Department of Agriculture Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The joint service dietitians promote healthy foods and have support from DLA, which acts as a voice to prime vendors. These standards are a foundation for DoD menus.

The service dietitians agreed to a joint “Go For Green” logo and criteria for each category, including entrees, sides, vegetables, etc. They will communicate one strong message about nutrition that all service members can understand. A color-coding system identifying food choices in the green, yellow or red categories represents the stoplight concept for easier-to-understand food selection on the service line. The “Go for Green” site on Human Performance Resource Center has been established at the following link: http://hprc-online.org/research. All “Go for Green” (Go Green) stoplight food-identification material, including tools, education and marketing for the program, is located on this site.

The Joint Service Recipe Committee continues to work on the Armed Forces Recipe file, which consists of more than 2,000 recipes. Some recipe updates are made while new recipes are developed. Prioritizing recipes in the file for testing over a five-year period and a process for reviewing completed recipes sent to the services from CFD-Natick Labs are items the committee completes. One of the goals of the committee is to produce healthy, nutritious recipes that taste great.

MANNING

NAVSUP continues to engage with representatives from TYCOMs, CNIC and CNP in reviewing and identifying senior enlisted culinary specialist billet gaps, both afloat and ashore, to promote training and optimal sea and shore rotation.

“To improve culinary excellence at sea, focus has been geared toward senior leadership,” King said. “PERS has been working aggressively with CFFC, COMPACFLT, and even the MCPON has asked the Chiefs Mess to ‘anchor up’ to develop and support a
spectrum of short, medium and long-term initiatives and policy changes to improve afloat manning, and specifically to give us a solid combination of levers to line up pay grades and skill sets with our shipboard requirements.

“There has been steady progress in filling billets,” King added. “With our focus on Senior CSs, getting our E-5s and above with critical skills back to sea is key to properly manning our ships, mitigating short-notice manning actions, such as cross-decks and divers, and ultimately ensuring fleet and operational readiness. PERS has been working aggressively and will continue to evaluate these policies, adjust as needed and refine longer-term solutions that will help properly man the Navy at sea and on shore.”

Improving the manning situation aboard ships is more than filling the available billets with qualified culinary specialists. It also includes reducing the hours spent in administrative duties and increasing overall efficiencies so the same amount of work can be accomplished with fewer sailors. “The prospect of continued cuts in budgets and manning makes process improvements even more important if the Navy is to accomplish missions,” King said.

Part of the effort to make foodservice operations more efficient has been development and implementation of the Food Service Management System (FSM 3).

TRAINING

“CNO said it best when he stated that if a welder has to keep welding to maintain and advance in proficiency ... a CS has to cook to maintain proficiency,” King said. “With the incorporation of more scratch cooking and new recipes into the menu we encouraged a ‘back-to-basics’ approach to ensure the Navy CSs hadn’t lost focus on the fundamental skills needed to prepare quality food, in a mass-production environment.”

“We are very fortunate to have Chef Michael Harants, the Navy’s Corporate Chef who leads our culinary training efforts,” King added. “It is critical to the Navy that culinary specialists have a solid foundation in hot- and cold-food preparation and its service.”

“Mastering the simple application of heat, understanding taste and melding flavors, and seeing how the color of presentations’ impact on the quality of meals are fundamental skills possessed by all great cooks,” Harants said.

During 2012, NAVSUP made efforts to deliver these foundations in a variety of ways, such as continuing education, on-the-job training and the culinary specialists’ life experiences. “We realize that everything we do as Navy Food Service has an impact on the customer; we see it as imperative that we provide the opportunities for the CS population to gain these skill sets,” Harants said.

Fundamental skills are the foundation of the NSCM. Chef Harants views the culinary specialists as professionals who often possess the drive and talent to become industry professionals, and are the reason he actively promotes the Adopt-a-Ship Program, in which top chefs from kitchens across the nation volunteer to serve for weeks aboard ships to teach culinary specialists finer culinary skills, industry best practices and build professional contacts for post-service employment. The program continues to prosper through the generous support of the culinary community. In 2012, 52 chefs volunteered for the program, taking the total number of chef visits to almost 600 since the start of the partnership. To date, the participants have completed almost 10 years of contact days with Navy culinary specialists, and the continuing-education-hours value stands at more than $5.5 million.

The successes of the program in 2012 continue to reside at multiple levels among the commands requesting chefs to come onboard and the culinarians who generously give their time and talents to the program. “The partnership that the program and the fleet have enjoyed over the years has returned great dividends,” Harants said. “Having riders on a ship underway is normal; having a rider that’s a chef is tremendous! On day one, the food is better; and yet the chef has not gotten to the galley yet. Perception is often reality.”

The program offers culinary specialists the chance to learn from some of industry’s best while still positioned in their galley environment with the food and equipment they work with every day. Chefs look for teachable moments during production, and offer excellent learning opportunities with quick feedback on the success or failure of the lesson through customer feedback.

“The program participants often state that the weeks aboard were as much a learning experience for them as it was for the CSs. Chefs who are often distracted from normal occurrences in private-sector kitchens are free of unmotivated staff, late food deliveries and other problems,” Harants said.

In recognition of excellence, the Adopt-a-Ship Program was presented the Workforce Magazine’s Optimus award for partnerships in 2012.

“Being recognized by a private organization for the work the Adopt-a-Ship Program has accomplished with organizations like the American Culinary Federation and CAFÉ Leadership was quite a compliment. The program received the award, but
it is shared by all,” Harants said.

“Without the partnership NAVSUP has enjoyed with the ACE, CAFÉ and other organizations like them, we would not be in the positions we are in today — meeting the demands of the fleet for more culinary educational opportunities,” King added.

Yet another part of the professional development and recognition of the culinary specialist community is the Fort Lee Joint Culinary Center of Excellence culinary competition. The annual culinary competition was held in March 2012. “It was a most successful show by any means of measurement; even more so because the Navy team did a tremendous job,” King said.

The Navy team was one of 17 teams competing in the “Installation of the Year” category, and achieved fifth place overall. Understanding the circumstance of the team makes this an amazing feat: short practice sessions, constant state of membership changes and first-time coming together for so many of them. The team had participation from Norfolk, Va.; Japan; Europe; San Diego, Calif., Washington, D.C.; and Annapolis, Md.

“With so many of them not having the opportunity to practice as a team, and a lot of virtual practice sessions, they still did incredibly well,” King said.

The Navy will be there in 2013 and beyond with fresh talent, supported by the skills of those who earned success from the past.

“The NFS team knows that for training gains to be maintained, khaki leadership needs to stay engaged with the younger CSs,” King said.

In September 2012, NAVSUP provided an opportunity for khaki culinary specialist leaders to participate in a culinary course in Norfolk, Va., to reaffirm/refresh their skills and commitment to continuing education. According to CSCS Paul Smith, “Over 30 (khaki) took the challenge to go back to a foundation-skills culinary class and learn from culinary instructors, and then took those learned skills back to their commands to support their junior CSs.”

The group had a weeklong class concluding with an assessment of their new skill delivery techniques. Each senior leader brought in one of their junior culinary specialists and taught them one of the skills learned during the course of the weeklong class. They were assessed by their peers, critiqued by their instructors and took back to their command some valued insight to apply to their operation.

In addition to improving the education of the larger culinary specialist community, NFS also manages the training and development of the Enlisted Aide (EA) program. The EA program has seen an increase in overall training, not just related to the culinary aspect of their daily duties but to the bigger subjects of household maintenance, fund management, and those foundation skills related to issues such as uniform rigging or other official duties.

Through the Personal Quarters Assistance Training Team (PQATT), NAVSUP has held one-on-one question-and-answer sessions with flag officers, or their spouses, to ensure questions and concerns have been thoroughly answered. NFS has received overwhelming positive response to this recent effort and the training provided to the enlisted aides by the flag officer community. The PQATT will continue to make visits to enlisted aides, and make the team available for training and questions to ensure they are well informed and trained to execute their responsibilities.

FSM3

Currently, 98 percent of the Navy is operating
on Food Service Management (FSM) 3. This includes afloat, ashore and submarines worldwide. The new FSM system provided enterprise visibility of food-service activity onboard all commands, to include ships deployed and operating at the tip of the spear. Items such as inventory, menu adherence, financial information, etc., can now be observed stateside. For example, an enterprise user can see information on last night’s dinner and act on any negative responses within a few hours. Menus can be adjusted immediately and resupply orders more efficiently reflect the changes. Problems that may have gone unnoticed for longer periods due to manpower shortages or focus on other mission-critical activities can now be addressed more quickly, and with less effort. FSM 3 acts both as a force extender and a force multiplier.

**EQUIPMENT AND SPACE DESIGN**

The efficiencies in management and record keeping would be lost if the fleet didn’t also keep a steady focus on the physical ship-space design and appliances inside the galleys. Duane Wright, the food service facilities and design specialist for ships and submarines, remarked: “Shifting a menu to use a particular product may improve operations in theory, but if the oven aboard can’t reach a certain temperature to properly cook a new menu option, then we’ve let the crew down.”

Wright, along with other experts across the Navy, carefully reviews initial equipment specifications during installation, repair and replacement. In 2012, there were several careful studies to maintain or improve ship space design.

Naval Air Forces Command (AIRFOR) is awaiting Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) to finalize and put the Integrated Logistics Support (ILS) package together and submit to the Web site catalog for a serving line with storage compartments underneath with digital temperature reading. In addition, AIRFOR awaits approval for an ethylene control unit to extend fresh fruits and vegetables shelf life. Finally, Natick completed testing for supporting documentation of four units to be installed in the chill space and hot and cold wells plug-and-play.

Naval Surface Forces (SURFOR) worked with NFS and other agencies to verify their equipment supports the NSCM for all platforms. This work-in-progress currently indicates success with all of the Patrol Craft units. Efforts are currently underway, and close to 80 percent completion, with the Destroyer (DDG) and Frigate (FFG) platforms. The Carrier (CVN), Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) and L-Decks are also making steady progress.

SUBFOR, Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA), NSWC, and NAVSUP stakeholders are moving forward regarding the NSN/APL/ILS packages, but priorities and objectives may need to be reexamined due to budgetary and manning considerations. NAVSEA also has LCS-3AF redesign flow of the scullery from all stakeholders Littoral Combat Ship Squadron One, NAVSEA, NSWC and NAVSUP.

**PRESENTATION SILVER**

An additional duty NFS takes seriously is maintaining the Navy’s silver assets for the Secretary of the Navy. In keeping with modernizing the force
and greater accountability, NFS adopted Navy’s automated ERP system to improve inventory maintenance and tracking for all of the Navy’s silver assets. In 2012, NFS added historical information to all silver assets in ERP. In addition, they also attached inventory archives for all silver collections to the data record. Members of the fleet responsible with physical custody of the silver assets received guidance regarding appraisals, repairs, cleaning and replacement protocols.

**FOOD SERVICE AWARDS**

An important aspect of improving standards and morale is recognizing excellence within the fleet. NFS administers the Captain Edward F. Ney Award and presents the honors annually to galleys of different sizes. For 2012, Navy military and International Food Service Executive Association (IFSEA) evaluators travelled extensively to complete 18 Ney evaluations. This was a great experience for all, with the evaluators obtaining first-hand knowledge of how Navy Food Service personnel perform their jobs. Navy general messes were evaluated for menu planning, preparation, acceptability, management, training, safety, sanitation, shipboard solid and plastics waste management, and facilities, equipment and utensils.

King understands the fiscal constraints and looming uncertainty that challenges the Navy Food Service in the years ahead. “I would encourage each of you to keep the faith and hope alive, and believe in who we are and what brought us to be the very best Navy in the world today. We in Navy Food Service understand our role, our responsibility and what we bring to the fight … keep the focus on the crew’s morale and well-being through home-cooked meals like the ones that only mom and grandma used to make.

“As a Navy Chef, take pride in what you do each and every day. The key to maintaining the fighting edge over our competition will require innovation, responsiveness and the best-fed sailors this nation can produce. We will accomplish this mission by continued alignment with our stakeholders, working together as a team and executing the mission safely, professionally and on time,” King concluded.

Heinrich concurred, adding: “The hard work of our CSs and foodservice team sustains and improves the quality of life and morale of Navy service members. Together, their combined efforts matter to the security of our nation and the well-being of the men and woman who go in harm’s way to protect it.”

**2013 NEY NOMINEES:**

**CNIC:**
Large Ashore:
Naval Activity Yokosuka
Naval Base KITSAP

Small Ashore:
NAS Jacksonville
NAS Oceana

**SUBMARINE CATEGORY:**
USS Maine (SSBN 741) (GOLD) Bangor, Maine
USS Cheyenne (SSN 773) Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
USS Alaska (SSBN 732) (GOLD) Kings Bay, Ga.
USS Helena (SSN 725) Norfolk, Va.

**SMALL AFLOAT CATEGORY:**
USS Reuben James (FFG 57) Pearl Harbor, Hawaii
USS Robert G. Bradley (FFG 49) Mayport, Fla.

**MEDIUM AFLOAT CATEGORY:**
USS Curtis Wilbur (DDG 54) Yokosuka, Japan
USS Stockdale (DDG 106) San Diego, Calif.
USS Ross (DDG 71) Norfolk, Va.
USS Philippine Sea (CG 58) Mayport, Fla.

**LARGE AFLOAT CATEGORY:**
USS Boxer (LHD 4) San Diego, Calif.
USS Wasp (LHD 1) Norfolk, Va.

**AIRCRAFT CARRIER CATEGORY:**
USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) Everett, Wash.
USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) Norfolk, Va.

‘As a Navy Chef, take pride in what you do each and every day.’

— Cmdr. Danny King, SC, USN.