

Fort Sam Houston
Commissary, JB
San Antonio, Texas

Experience Guides Candy Department Success



Store Director Beth Adams stands before a portion of the candy assortment at the Fort Sam Houston Commissary, JB San Antonio, Texas.

Heading an active commissary which features an equally active candy department is all part of a day's work for Beth Adams, the long-time Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) store director who has helmed the Fort Sam Houston Commissary, JB San Antonio, Texas, for the past three years.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Adams began her commissary career in 1989 as an intermittent cashier at Minot AFB, N.D., with the Air Force Commissary Service (AFCOMS), one of DeCA's predecessor commissary services. As DeCA

was beginning its operations in 1991, she was promoted to customer service manager there.

"I have served in a number of capacities, allowing me to gain extensive knowledge in the grocery industry and ever-changing business operations," Adams told *E and C News*.

"My first mentor in the early stages of my career was Robert O. Greene, store director — since retired — at the Minot AFB Commissary, who always believed in my abilities, ambitions and aspirations," Adams recalled. "He was my biggest supporter and told me, 'Always do your best and you will achieve great things.' I will always be grateful to him for the confidence and outstanding support he gave me."

In 2003, after early positions at McChord AFB and NAS Whidbey Island, both in Washington State, Adams had her first commissary leadership position, as store manager at Fort Sam Houston. In 2007, she was promoted to store director at Cannon AFB, N.M., and two years later, in 2009, she was named store director, Fort Hood II, Texas. She returned to the Fort Sam

Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Commissary YTD FY18 Sales Breakdown By Selected Candy Subcategory

Candy Subcategory	YTD18 Sales	YTD17 Sales	% change
1) Seasonal	\$93,739	\$96,627	-2.99%
2) Chocolate	\$64,952	\$71,202	-8.78%
3) Non-Chocolate	\$35,460	\$36,292	-2.29%
4) Premium Candy	\$21,267	\$22,041	-3.51%
5) Gum and Mints	\$21,097	\$23,957	-12.00%
Total	\$236,515	\$250,136	-5.45%

Note: Year-to-date sales are through May 2018.
Source: DeCA

Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Commissary YTD FY18 Top-Selling Candy By Dollar Volume

- 1) Lammes Candies Pecan Pralines (16 oz.)
- 2) Lammes Candies Chocolate Pecan Longhorns (10 oz.)
- 3) Hershey's Milk Chocolate Candy (9.3-oz. 6-pack)
- 4) Hershey's Candy All-Time Greats (31 oz.)*
- 5) Hershey's Milk Chocolate Kisses (11 oz.)*
- 6) Hawaiian Host AlohaMacs Milk Chocolate Macadamia Nuts (7 oz.)
- 7) Mars Snickers Fun Size (10.59 oz.)
- 8) Mars M&M's with Peanuts (42 oz.)
- 9) Hershey's Assorted Candy Miniatures (40 oz.)
- 10) Hershey's Assorted Snack-Size Candy (100-count, 39.90 oz.)

Note: Those items marked with an asterisk (*) are seasonal items. Year-to-date sales are through May 2018.
Source: DeCA

Houston Commissary in 2015 as its store director.

CANDY SALES, TOP ITEMS

In addition to front-end racks and one-time-buy (OTB) promotional items, the Fort Sam Houston commissary candy department offers patrons 120 linear feet of candy, including 459 line items of regularly displayed items, not including holiday candy.

Although candy category sales here are not as high as they were a year ago, they are still significant. Including seasonal items, sales were \$628,999 for the most recent 52 weeks — June 2017 to May 2018 — versus \$659,049 for the prior 52 weeks, a decrease of 4.56 percent.

Sales through May were led by seasonal candy, with chocolate coming in the runners-up spot.

Local preferences play an unexpectedly, for some, large part in the dollar volume picture (see chart). Items from Lammes Candies — one of the state of Texas' longest-operating candy companies, out of Austin and in business since 1885 — top the list of the Fort Sam Houston commissary's fiscal 2018 top candy sellers by dollar volume.

What is "trending in areas may differ by demographics," Adams said. "However, we see incremental sales growth for snacking products and natural and better-for-you (BFY) products, and of course, those that gear towards our 'little kiddos.'"

"Core snacking products command high sales volumes — especially the single-sized products that are displayed on our racks at every register — for those who have that pick-me-up craving after their shopping trip through the store."

TEAMWORK

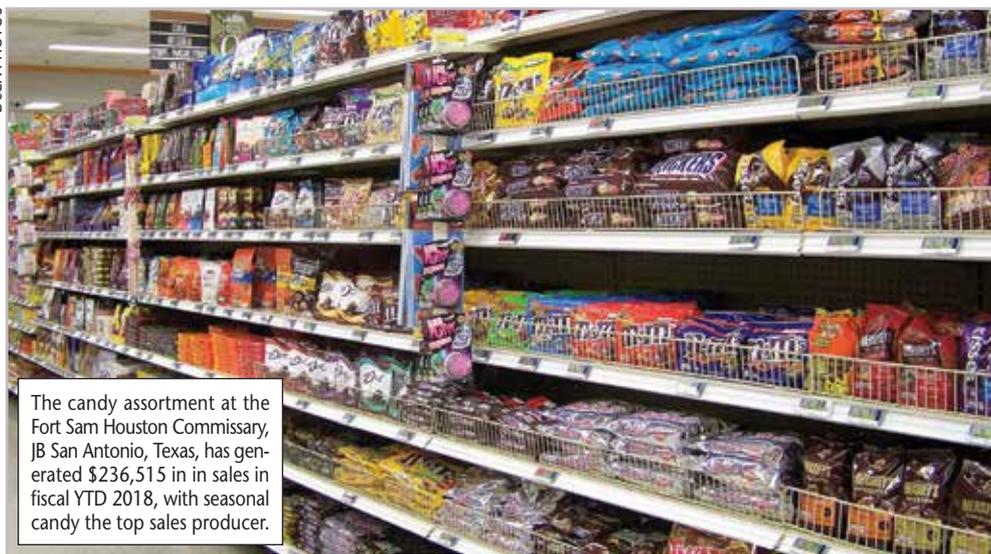
Adams said that her commissary has found that showcasing candy "serves best" in the areas that customers visit the most throughout their shopping trip, including the checkout areas, the store entrance, queuing line and mass display areas, where she said "it is easy to build massive, creative and exciting displays, especially throughout the holiday seasons such as Halloween, Christmas, Valentines and Easter."

She added that teamwork is important to the success of the store's candy department. "Our industry partners provide promotional support and help build displays to ensure we present our patrons with those that are exciting, unique and eye-catching," she said.

"The agency's Store Operations group at Fort Lee, Va., provides each commissary with exciting product growth and category promotional items for each event, allowing the stores to promote the most sought-after items in each category to stay in line with customer demand and changing trends," Adams noted. "Halloween and Christmas promotional events contribute to the majority of candy sales throughout the year."

—E and C NEWS

DeCA PHOTOS



The candy assortment at the Fort Sam Houston Commissary, JB San Antonio, Texas, has generated \$236,515 in sales in fiscal YTD 2018, with seasonal candy the top sales producer.