

Wisconsin Army National Guard: Receives runner up for two national level maintenance awards

Posted on Thursday, Mar 11, 2021

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A Wisconsin National Guard unit and a Field Maintenance Shop (FMS) were both recognized as the runner up in their categories for the Chief of Staff of the Army Fiscal Year 2019 Army Award for Maintenance Excellence (AAME).

The Wisconsin Army National Guard's FMS #7, located in Eau Claire, received runner up for the Army National Guard Table of Distribution and Allowances category, while Company E, 132nd Brigade Support Battalion was runner up in the Army National Guard Modification Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) medium category.

The Chief of Staff Army Award for Maintenance Excellence Program is conducted each year to recognize Army units or activities that have demonstrated excellence in maintenance operations. Each unit is evaluated on their effectiveness ensuring that Soldier competency is maintained. Assessments of each unit in the categories of attitude and effective leadership are rated with a benchmark based on those of past winners, and the tenets of exceptional maintenance processes that were exhibited are validated and ranked.

Maj. Gen. Paul Knapp, Wisconsin's adjutant general, presented representatives from FMS #7 with their plaque and the Chief of Staff of the Army's AAME coin during an awards presentation at the state's Joint Force Headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin, March 4. Chief Warrant Officer 4 Eric Kitelinger, the shop supervisor, and Sgt. Montanna Marlett, the shop's production controller, accepted the award on behalf of the shop.

“Out of 500 competitors, getting the runner up is a pretty amazing accomplishment,” Knapp said. “I’m so proud of you guys. I’m proud of the representation of Wisconsin at the national level.”

Brig. Gen. Joane Mathews, Wisconsin’s deputy adjutant general for Army, also presented Kitelinger with a coin on behalf of Lt. Gen. Jon Jensen, director of the Army National Guard.

“What a great effort being recognized nationally by such an esteemed award,” Mathews said. “I know it doesn’t take just a couple of people to do it. It takes an entire team. It takes a lot of time. It takes a lot of dedication and it’s all for a great cause.”

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Troy Bittner, the Wisconsin Army National Guard’s command chief warrant officer, recognized Kitelinger for not only supervising the shop, but for his role on the maintenance inspection team.

“Not only does he have his shop in order, but he goes and spreads that knowledge and that information to the rest of the shops around our state, helping them improve,” Bittner said.

Bittner also recognized Marlett’s role at the shop, stating that their success wouldn’t have happened without the right person in her position.

“For those who don’t know a lot about the maintenance shops, all of our maintenance shops have a production and control person, somebody that really runs the flow of work coming in and out,” Bittner said. “Sgt. Marlett is that person up at the FMS, and every piece of equipment that they touch goes across her desk.”

Command Sgt. Maj. Rafael Conde, the Wisconsin Army National Guard’s senior enlisted leader, also showed his appreciation for the work done at FMS #7 to ensure the Wisconsin Army National Guard can accomplish its missions.

“I don’t think you do it because of the award or the recognition,” Conde said. “I think you do it because it’s important for the force, and it’s important for our Soldiers to get good equipment that they can do their missions with.”

Kitelinger was grateful for the recognition for the work done at the maintenance shop. He reiterated that it takes a team working together to be successful.

“We have eight other people who work at our shop,” Kitelinger said. “They were definitely very instrumental in receiving this award and us putting out an effective and efficient shop.”

The runner up in the MTOE competition, Company E, 132nd Brigade Support Battalion, based in Antigo, Wisconsin, is a forward support company responsible for providing logistics and maintenance support to the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team’s 173rd Brigade Engineer Battalion. Company E were recognized at a training event earlier this month.