



TORII LEGAL ASSISTANCE

OFFICE OF THE STAFF JUDGE ADVOCATE



TORII STATION WINS PRESTIGIOUS CHIEF OF STAFF AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN LEGAL ASSISTANCE

BY: RUDY WARTELLA

On Thursday, 25 July 2013, the 10th Regional Support Group Legal Assistance Office on Okinawa was named as the winner of the coveted Chief of Staff Award for Excellence in Legal Assistance for Fiscal Year 2012 in the small office category.

The 2012 winners in the medium-sized office category included: Ansbach Law Center; Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center and Presidio of Monterey; Kaiserslautern Law Center; National Training Center and Fort Irwin; Northern Law Center; Stuttgart Law Center; US Army Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth; US Army Training Center and Fort Jackson.

The large office winners were: XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg; 1st Armored Division and Fort Bliss; 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley; 3rd Infantry Division and Fort Stewart; US Army Cadet Command and Fort Knox; US Army Fires Center of Excellence and Fort Sill; US Army Research, Development and Engineering Command and Aberdeen Proving Ground

The reserve component winners were: 81st Regional Support Command; Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center; North Carolina Joint Forces Headquarters

According to HQDA, the selection rate for winners in this year's competition reflects a careful evaluation of the applications, recognizing only those offices that were truly exceptional. Offices that did not win this year continue to deliver quality Legal Assistance; however, they did not demonstrate the degree of excellence to satisfy the award criteria.

A Historical Perspective

In 1987 this award was named the Chief of Staff's Award for Excellence in Legal Assistance. **Although judge advocates oversee the legal assistance and preventive law programs, the programs are actually the responsibility of commanders.** The Chief of Staff's Award honors those commands that have committed their legal resources to help Soldiers and their Families with their personal legal problems.

The criteria for evaluating the nominees include: The extent and quality of a nominee's legal assistance and preventive law programs; responsiveness to clients' needs, the professionalism of the attorneys and supporting personnel, and the use of legal specialists and noncommissioned officers. Any innovations by an office that benefit the legal assistance and preventive law programs are evaluated. Although statistics may be submitted, workload is not the sole factor used to evaluate nominees.

The Judge Advocate General appoints a board to evaluate the nominations. The President of the board is the Assistant Judge Advocate General for Military Law. The Chief, Legal Assistance Office, Office of the Judge

Advocate General; the Chief, Legal Assistance Branch, The Judge Advocate General's School; one company grade judge advocate officer; and one legal specialist or noncommissioned officer are members of the board. The board recommends an office in each category to the Judge Advocate General, who selects the winners.

Excerpts from the Military Law Review, Volume 122, pp 339, 40.

