

Two ASC men earn Army-level Lean Six Sigma awards

Two Army Sustainment Command men, Robert Farr and Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jose Marquez, earned 2009 Army Lean Six Sigma Excellence Awards.

They were among 11 recipients recognized during a late-November ceremony hosted by Lt. Gen. Robert Durbin, special assistant to the Army chief of staff for Enterprise Management, in the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes.

Durbin praised the recipients for "providing the innovation, business savvy and continuous drive to improve the way the Army operates."

The winners were selected by a team of eight Army and civilian LSS experts. Winners received plaques and certificates signed by the secretary of the Army and the chief of staff of the Army. They were presented by Durbin and Joyce E. Morrow, special administrative assistant to the secretary of the Army.

"Collectively, the Lean Six Sigma community has completed nearly 5,000 projects [at a cost savings of] almost \$14 billion," Durbin said. This "simply could not have been achieved without the experience and know-how of this esteemed group."

"Lean Six Sigma professionals like yourselves are providing the innovation, business savvy, and continuous drive to improve the way the Army operates," Durbin said.

"Our commanders are constantly challenged to provide logistical support in multiple locations, often for new requirements and usually against very short timelines," said Ron Davis, Army Materiel Command's deputy chief of staff for Business Transformation.

"They are looking for innovative ways to improve our processes so that we can more efficiently and effectively accomplish AMC's missions," Davis said. "Lean Six Sigma is providing a solid roadmap to providing these critical improvements."

According to Davis, LSS has saved AMC more than \$1 billion over the last five years.

Farr and Marquez led their projects on behalf of the 404th Army Field Support Brigade, Fort Lewis, Wash.

Farr's team won the Enterprise Level Project Team Award by reducing the Command Post System Integration (CPSI) reset cycle time by 53 percent, eliminating the requirement for overtime work and reducing overall required man-hours while still improving process capability by a factor of 1.71. The project yielded annual cost reduction of \$1.81 million

Marquez and his group earned the Non-Enterprise Level Project Team Award by streamlining Directorate of Logistics supply operations. Their work increased parts inventory accountability and reduced maintenance parts lead time, resulting in a net savings of over \$2.5M.

When the Army embraced Lean Six Sigma five years ago, Durbin said, it "understood that comprehensive transformation of the Army would demand a revolutionary program. We knew that we needed a trained and mature team who understood the Army, and who could apply critical thinking skills in a disciplined fashion to help the Army overcome the complexities of our organization."

The Army's Lean Six Sigma initiative has since grown and intensified in conjunction with the service's heightened operational tempo caused by the need for ongoing troop deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Operational units are built, trained, deployed, and returned to home at an unprecedented pace," Durbin said. "So just doing the same old processes... faster to keep up with demand isn't the answer. We must profoundly change how we operate and how we generate forces."