Awards banquet honors WADS' many deserving recipients

Photo by Staff Sgt. Chuck Snyder

Sector award winners and presenters pose for a photo following the Jan. 9 banquet.

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The 2008 Annual Awards Ceremony, prepared by the Western Air Defense Sector's Top Three Association, was held Jan.11, 2009. Over two hundred airmen, family members and friends filled the banquet hall inside McChord's Consolidated Club to pay tribute to 49 deserving airmen nominated by their supervisors for outstanding performance. The Sector's annual award recipients for 2008 were:

Airman First Class Jordan Schaefer, Airman
Master Sgt. David Rock, NCO
Master Sgt. Tammy Weber, SNCO
Airman First Class Brian Kulp, Enlisted Drill Status Guardsman (DSG) Category I
Staff Sgt. Ericson Cereno, Honor Guard
Capt. John Weldon, Company Grade Officer
Capt. Lisa Dowling, CGO DSG
Mr. Carl Morgan, Civilian Category I
Ms. Cathy Wenzel, Civilian Category II

Also, the Sector had individuals compete and win at the state level:

Airman First Class Jordan Schaefer, Airman
Master Sgt. David Rock, NCO
Master Sgt. Tammy Weber, SNCO
Master Sgt. Allan Lawson, First Sergeant
Staff Sgt. Ericson Cereno, Honor Guard

One of many noteworthy 2008 success stories was Capt. John Weldon successfully calling in the first MQ-9 Reaper strike while deployed in Afghanistan. Special guests included WADS Honorary Commanders, past and present along with several civic leaders. Sponsors and contributors for the ceremony were Pierce Military and Business Alliance Members; Air Force Association; Les Schwab; USAA; The Museum of Flight; and Armed Forces Bank.

Mother and daughter duo, Tech. Sgt. Connie Ingvarsson and Staff Sgt. Melinda Ingvarsson both made it up on stage for being nominated for their respected awards making the night for the Ingvarsson family a special one.

Distinguished guests in attendance at the awards banquet included the guest speaker Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Wood, Command Senior Enlisted Leader for NORAD and United States Northern Command; Brig. Gen. Gary Magonigle, Commander, Washington Air National Guard; Col. Ed Piecek, Director of Staff, WA ANG; Col. William Flanigan, Commander, 446th Airlift Wing; Command Chief Master Sgt Charles Haley, WA ANG; Command Chief Master Sgt. Gloria Bennett 446th AW; Col. Paul Gruver, Commander and Col. Robert Ezelle, Vice Commander, Western Air Defense Sector.

During his speech, Command Sgt. Maj. Wood highlighted major accomplishments in WADS' commitment to excellence in 2008. His speech praised WADS for their ability to overcome obstacles during a time when our nation's defense faces difficult challenges with the economy and rogue nations.

The ceremony began when WADS' own Honor Guard posted the colors. Individual volunteers who supported the banquet include Chief Master Sgts. Bob Nichols and Trisha Almond served as emcees, Master Sgt. Marvin Shields Jr. sang the National Anthems, and Chaplain Lt. Col. Timothy McKenna gave the benediction. Staff Sergeant Charles Snyder provided the photography support. Sector Commander Colonel Gruver ended the banquet with closing comments praising his troops and their families for a job well done in 2008.

Editors Note: Since the WADS' annual awards banquet, Mr. Carl Morgan - Civilian Category 1, and Capt John Weldon - Company Grade Officer competed at a higher level and were recognized by higher headquarters 1AF/CONR as annual award winners for their respected categories. Mr. Morgan and Capt Weldon will travel to Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla. in late April to receive their awards and also go on from there to compete at the NORAD/NORTHCOM level.