



Taylor coached and mentored and led way for many in logistics field

The Defense Logistics Agency Hall of Fame recognizes and honors former members of the DLA community who have made significant and enduring contributions to the Agency. This year's ceremony included two former DDC leaders, Donald P. Brown and Jerri Taylor.

Strong willed and knowledgeable in every aspect of logistics, Jerri Taylor tore down barriers in what was once the predominately male world of distribution. Her career is one that many followers hope to emulate.

Taylor began her civil service career in 1974 as a clerk typist at the New Cumberland Army Depot, New Cumberland, Pa. After holding positions in the Inventory Division and the General Supply Division she was accepted into the Army's Transportation Intern Program in 1978 and attended the Army's Transportation Officer Basic and Advanced Course at Fort Eustis, Va. After graduation from the program, she was assigned to the Army Depot System Command in Chambersburg, Pa., where she managed transportation policy for Army depots throughout the continental United States.

In 1981, Taylor accepted an assignment at the Army Logistics Management College in Fort Lee, Va. as an instructor of Logistics Management in the Depot Operations Management Course. She was promoted to course director of the Depot Operations Management Course in 1986, and served as a senior instructor for physical distribution topics for the

Logistics Executive Development Course, the Quartermaster General Officer Orientation Course, and the Quartermaster Officer Advanced Course.

From 1989 to 1992, Taylor served as the deputy director for Supply, Ammunition, and Transportation at Letterkenny Army Depot. In this position, she managed the receipt, storage, packaging, and shipment functions of a \$7 billion inventory with a workforce of 1,100 employees.

In 1992, she accepted the position of transportation officer, Defense Distribution Depot Susquehanna, Pennsylvania, or DDSP, the largest multi-site distribution complex in the Department of Defense. Taylor was a strong proponent of using innovative technology to improve the distribution processes of velocity, value, and visibility. She led the implementation of the use of Radio Frequency Identification/ In-transit Visibility technology and established an automated call center, both of which played a key role in DLA's transportation reinvention efforts. In 2001, Taylor served as the operations manager for the second shift at DDSP, managing more than 500 employees further sharpening her operational skills.

Because of her reputation as a dynamic leader, Taylor was personally selected by the commander, Defense Distribution Center, to become the director for the Defense Distribution Depot Richmond, Va. in April 2004, where she served until her untimely passing in October 2008. During her tenure,

Taylor's leadership was instrumental in DDRV's achievement of outstanding performance records.

Director, one of her first accomplishments was the clean-up of almost 25,000 commercial gas cylinders. As a demonstration of her good stewardship, she established accountability of the assets; rather than disposing of the cylinders, she directed their processing through the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service sales program. Her partnership with DRMS saved the government an estimated \$1 million in disposal cost avoidance.

Taylor then ordered the renovation of three warehouses to improve the safety, health, and quality of life for DDRV employees. At DDRV, she was a leader in DDC's efforts in Base Realignment and Closure, and A-76 competitions.

DDRV won the first A-76 competition, but a contractor won the second. Taylor empowered the workforce to take ownership of their careers and to properly prepare for their transition; she made herself available to them and provided advice and compassion. Throughout the transition to a contract workforce, the employees believed in her hands-on style and acted in a truly professional manner, keeping metrics well within DDC tolerances, and effectively supporting the Warfighter.

Performance statistics clearly demonstrate Taylor's impact on DDRV. Prior to her arrival, high priority Materiel Release Orders,



The late Jerri Taylor, former director, Defense Distribution Depot Richmond, Va.

or MROs averaged 2.1 days to process; routine MROs averaged 2.6 days. Within six months of Taylor's assumption of command, the average processing time for high priority MROs was down to 0.8 days; and, processing for routine MROs was down to an incredible 0.6 days- a full two days faster.

Average new procurement receipts went from 0.7 days to 0.4 days and customer return receipts improved from 1.4 days to 0.6 days. These dramatic changes in metrics led to an impressively low customer denial rate of 0.55 percent during her tenure. These achievements are more noteworthy when it is realized prior to Taylor's arrival, DDRV missed the one-day processing goals for 17 consecutive months.

DDRV's Culture Survey results are

another illustration of the dynamic nature of Taylor's mentoring and leadership. The survey is benchmarked against a database of over 800 other organizations. DDRV's results were in the bottom quartile of the 888 organizations polled, prompting Taylor to act decisively. She instituted town hall meetings, team building, leadership development, and communication training, and "flattened" the organizational structure which ensured guidance wasn't lost in translation from senior leadership to employee.

She stressed improving DDRV performance by educating the workforce on the importance of metrics and directed Information Systems Division to post dates, priorities, and statistics so employees could see daily feedback on performance measurements.

Taylor spent a great deal of time in the warehouses with the employees, receiving feedback, and soliciting innovative ideas for efficient processes. Demonstrating leadership by example, she fostered trust and loyalty and encouraged employees to extend those qualities from the workplace to their personal and family lives.

The results of the 2004 Culture Survey were astounding. The DDRV Denison Cultural Index improved from 7.58 points to 27.1 points, a 258 percent increase. This only spurred Taylor on to greater action and by 2006, the index had risen to 61.67 points, an additional 128 percent over the 2004 results, making the

total increase from 2004 to 2006 an unheard of 714 percent.

Taylor was lauded by her peers and senior leadership for her many accomplishments. She motivated and empowered her workforce to take ownership of their depot and see the bigger logistics picture beyond their job titles.

Throughout her career, Taylor's excellence was formally recognized by numerous civilian awards. She was the recipient of a Meritorious Civilian Service Award, numerous Special Act Awards, and was presented with the PowerTrack Management Innovation Award by the Assistant Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Transportation Policy.

Taylor was a graduate of the Professional Development Program at Simmons College Graduate School of Management in Boston, Mass. and attended Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. As a member of the Margaret Corbin Chapter of Federally Employed Women, she was a proponent of women in pursuit of excellence and corporate advancement, and was an active member of the National Defense Transportation Association.

Taylor's performance clearly demonstrated her extraordinary leadership abilities. Although she had gained enormous technical, hands-on experience over a career spanning several decades, it was Taylor's love for people and her willingness to be a teacher, coach, and mentor that set her apart.

Taylor left a legacy of profound excellence in the Defense Logistics Agency and the Department of Defense.