

## Army hosts food safety and management certification symposium

by Keiko McPherson, Public Affairs



Fifty-three Soldiers, Marines, Sailors and civilians listen to course instructor Frank Cocheo during the Food Safety and Management Certification Symposium at the U.S.O. on Kadena Air Base Sept. 21st through 24th.

The U.S. Army on Okinawa hosted a Food Safety and Management Certification Symposium at the United Services Organization on Kadena Air Base Sept. 21-24.

Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Nathaniel Barnes, Food Operations Sergeant, 1st Battalion, 1st Air Defense Artillery and Warrant Officer Abduel Sanford, Group Food Adviser, 10<sup>th</sup> Support Group, coordinated bringing the course to Okinawa for the first time.

Fifty-three Soldiers, Marines, Sailors and civilians attended the seminar, including 19 Soldiers from 1/1 ADA, eight from Japan District Veterinary Command and four from 10<sup>th</sup> Support Group.

Participants were required to take three exams during the four day session.

“The first exam, Certified Professional Food Manager, encompasses criteria for food management and food safety. We do that on Monday. On the second day, Tuesday, we just do a lecture in preparation of another exam, Certified Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Manager. On Thursday, we do a lecture in the morning for the Master Certified Food Executive (MCFE) exam that they take Thursday afternoon. It has 200 questions and usually takes four to five hours, but it’s a very prestigious certification for them to have. It covers everything from food safety to HACCP management and food management on the upper level,” said Frank Cocheo, certified trainer, EH Manley and Associates, which conducts these symposiums all around the world for the U.S. military. According to Cocheo, their chief executive officer just returned from symposi-

ums in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kuwait.

“There are a lot of Soldiers who are deployed there, and we have to go to Soldiers. We’re committed to making sure that wherever you are, that’s where we are going to be,” he said.

Out of 53 students, 23 passed the MCFE test. Nine scored between 65-69 and ten scored between 60-64, all receiving certification as Certified Food Execu-

tive. The test results of Certified HACCP Manager and Certified Professional Food Manager are not in yet, but most likely everybody will pass.

Master Sgt. Paulette Roberts-Detwiler, Senior Food Operations Sgt., 10<sup>th</sup> Support Group, passed the Master Certified Food Executive test.

“The “Holy Crap” test was one of the hardest tests I’ve ever taken. This symposium is great for all service members and civilians—you can’t beat it. They came all the way to Okinawa to give us this great class,” she said.

Other Soldiers from 10<sup>th</sup> Support Group, Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Sherman Harris and Sgt. Niki Zimmerman, were certified as Certified Food Manager. Zimmerman’s husband also attended and was certified as Master Certified Food Executive.

Sgt. Brian Harris, Dining Facility Shift Leader, Echo Company, 1/1 ADA, who has been in the food service field for ten years, was certified as Certified Food Manager.

“The seminar was hard, but it will pay off. Its given me a chance to expand on my job more. This is a good class—everybody should take this even if they aren’t in food service because it’s a good test of knowledge,” said Harris.

“The class is very informative. It’s good information. It reinforces the knowledge that you already have. For the individuals who don’t have the experience that I have, it is a base for them to start learning the process of HACCP,” said Marine Gunnery Sgt. David Scharf, Food Service Subsistence Chief, 3rd Marine Logistics Group. He has been in the food service field for 15 years.