

LS1 Helms is Military Citizen of the Year

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Staff Writer

Logistics Specialist 1st Class (EXW) Sven Helms was named the 2010 Military Citizen of the Year during the annual luncheon at the Roy M. Wheat Galley on board Naval Air Station Meridian, April 14.

Helms was amazed after the announcement was made that he won.

"It's overwhelming," Helms said. "I have a great time doing it (volunteering). It gives me and the students a chance to go out and serve the community."

Helms was presented the award by Crystal Dupre', president of the Meridian Area Navy League. The award goes to the military member, first nominated by their command, who best represents the spirit of volunteerism and community involvement. This program is open to all active duty enlisted personnel in pay grades E-4 to E-8 who volunteer their time and talent to benefit the local community. The nominees are judged on community involvement, military bearing and performance.

"Nothing gives me more pleasure to be out in town and have people come up to me to thank me for the great support that our Sailors and Marines give

to the community," said Capt. Charles Gibson, commanding officer of NAS Meridian. "I can't take credit for the great job, but it's folks like LS1 Helms and Chief Hoffman that organize these events and get the Sailors and Marines to help."

Helms is Naval Technical Training Center's (NTTC) Military Standards Division Leading Petty Officer and the coordinator for Students Helping Interesting People in the Meridian Area Through Enthusiastic Service (SHIPMATES) program.

In the past year, Helms helped to manage 135 events for NTTC's SHIPMATES program including Habitat for Humanity, Gaits for Greatness, State Games of Mississippi, Merrehope Restoration Foundation, the Wesley House and the local Veterans Day parade.

Chief Master-at-Arms Clarence Hoffman was also recognized as NAS Meridian's nominee.

"Helms is very deserving," Hoffman said. "It's an honor to be nominated and recognized. Coming in second place is not that bad. We owe it to the Sailors and Marines who help us."

Helms and Hoffman received gifts from GEICO, Navy Federal Credit Union, East Mississippi Business Development Corporation on behalf of local area businesses, and the Meridian Area Navy League.