



The Unsung Heroes of Food Service

Story by MC3 (SW/AW) Mack Jamieson
5 Star Writer

Working temporary assigned duty (TAD) for Supply Department on the Mess Decks and around the ship is an experience most junior Sailors get at their first sea duty command, and it is no different aboard Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) (IKE).

The time these Sailors spend as Food Service Attendants (FSAs), usually four months, can be trying. They work long hours out of their rate.

Senior Chief Logistics Specialist Christopher Wood, leading chief petty officer of Supply Department's S-2M Division, said FSAs are responsible for many different aspects of food service operations.

"We currently have 125 FSAs who do everything from breaking out the boxes of food out of storage to augmenting the man power in the galleys for food preparation," said Wood. "The most visible FSAs are out on the mess decks working in the bays sweeping, swabbing, and maintaining the condiments."

Wood said the FSAs who work in the sculleries taking and washing dishes are some of the more unsung workers of food service operations.

"The scullery workers and trash workers are kind of the men behind the curtain," said Wood. "They are behind the scenes, but they play an important role."

For their uniform of the day, Wood said FSAs wear either a blue T-shirt or,

if they are supervisors, a grey T-shirt.

"Grey shirts are there for leadership and direction of the blue shirt employees as well as to assist customers with information," said Wood. "Anyone who is TAD as an FSA is capable of being a grey shirt, but it takes someone who is motivated and a team player to earn that grey shirt."

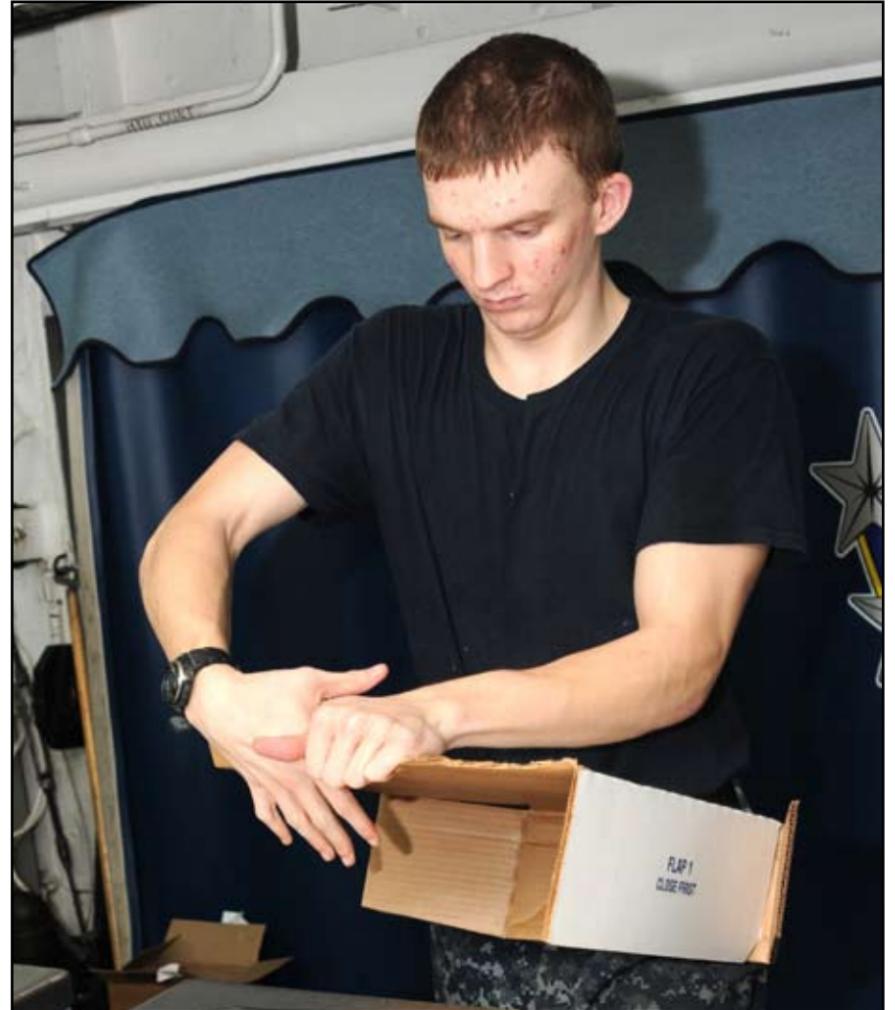
Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Fuels) Airman Lindsay Morgan, who has been a Bay 2 FSA for two months, said the job can be tedious, but working around people from different rates and meeting new people is an advantage of working as an FSA.

"It is great getting to meet different people and network with different departments and divisions," said Morgan. "I have just viewed it as an opportunity to learn more about other rates and life on the ship, in general."

"I've had a lot of fun," said Morgan. "We laugh and joke around. We work hard, but it has been a good experience."

Working hard, said Wood, is exactly what all his FSAs do, and that is something Sailors should remember when they go to the mess decks.

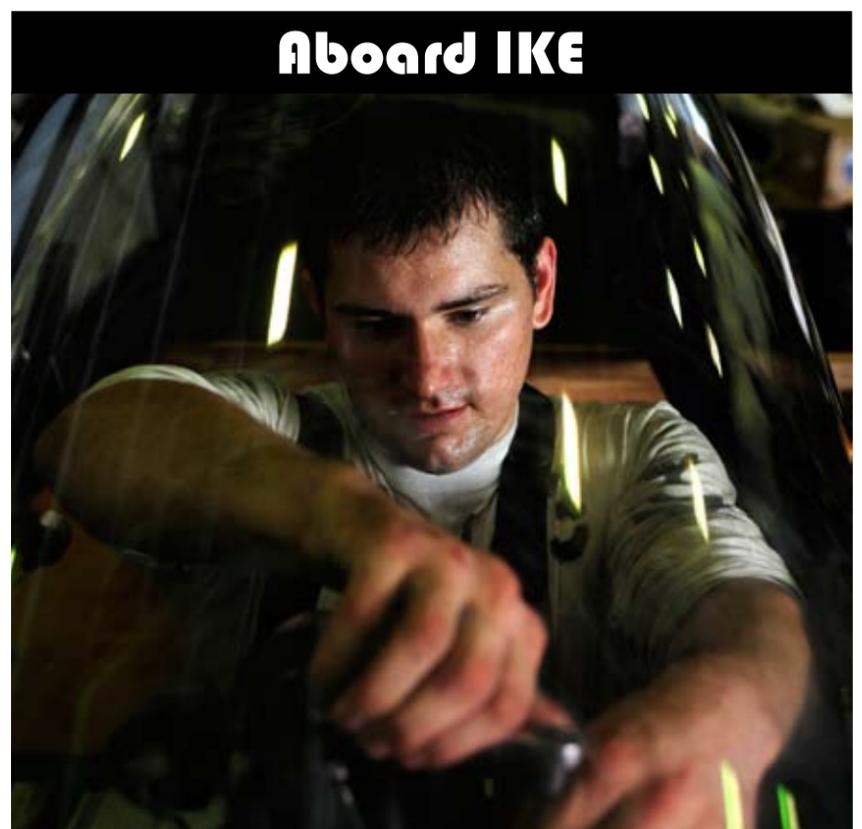
"These guys do a lot of hard work, day in and day out, seven days a week," said Wood. "Day and night check both work seven days a week, with no holiday routine. The repetitiveness of this job can be daunting for someone who didn't sign up to work in food service, but they come to work every day and do a great job. They don't always get a lot of thanks, but they always do their job, and they deserve a lot of credit for that."



Aviation Ordnanceman Airman Chris Chapman from Weapon's G-2 Division breaks down boxes as part of his temporary assigned duties as a food service attendant (FSA). (Photo by MC3 (SW/AW) Mack Jamieson)



Aviation Structural Mechanic Airman Jennifer Hargat from the "Nightdippers" of HS-5 wipes a table in Bay 2 as part of her duties as an FSA. (Photo by MC3 (SW/AW) Mack Jamieson)



Aviation Structural Mechanic (Equipment) 2nd Class Stephen Bessette installs a wire harness on a replacement canopy for an F/A-18E Super Hornet from the "Pukin Dogs" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 143 aboard IKE. (Photo by MC3 (SW/AW) Bradley Evans)



PROFILE



QuarterMaster

QM3(SW) Kayantae Johnson

“As a Quartermaster, I maintain a safe and accurate plot of the ship's position. The greatest thing about my job is knowing that my work keeps the ship and crew members safe. This job is exciting. I love standing watch on the bridge and interacting with different rates and people. I enjoy the Navy because I'm doing something good for my country, and I'm protecting my family and friends.”

Department/Division:
Navigation/ NAV

Hometown:
Norfolk, Va.

Time in the Navy:
3 Years

Goals:
Advance to QM2, Earn EAWS

Deployments:
**Operation Enduring Freedom
2009 & 2010**

