

Legal NCO Dubbed **OUTSTANDING ENLISTED** of Pikes Peak Region

By DJ Montoya, 1st Space Brigade



COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – A Soldier from U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command, SSG Nicholas A. Brown garnered the title of Outstanding Enlisted in Category Two (E-5 and E-6) during the 2009 Armed Forces Day Luncheon on May 15. The annual event held at the Broadmoor was sponsored by the Greater Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce.

Brown, the operations paralegal Noncommissioned Officer in charge, USASMDC/ARSTRAT Operations in Colorado Springs, is only the second command Soldier to capture one of the titles. 1st Space Company 1SG Steven Adams took the title in the Senior Enlisted category last year.

Brown, along with PFC Abner Marrero, human resource specialist, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Space Battalion, joined ten other finalists in the running for three top outstanding enlisted spots.

The competition is part of the week long Pike's Peak Regional Armed Forces celebration. It allows Space Soldiers to compete head-to-head against the more than 20,000 other men and women in the area from all Department of Defense services, to include active and reserve components, and even Canadian Forces. This year's 12 best included one member from the Canadian Forces, five from the U.S. Air Force, three from the U.S. Air Force Reserve and three U.S. Army competitors.

With all the vetting Brown came to learn about a month ago that he had made it to the finalist stage of the competition.

"I was happy I was named a finalist, but I didn't know I was going to win in my category (E-5 and E-6)," said Brown.



SSG Nicholas A. Brown, operations paralegal Noncommissioned Officer in charge, U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command / Army Forces Strategic Command, walks away with this year's title of Outstanding Enlisted in Category Two (E-5 & E-6) during the May 15 Armed Forces Luncheon sponsored by the Greater Colorado Springs Chamber of Commerce. Corporate sponsor Mike Shaw presented the award to Brown as MG Mark Graham, commanding general, Division West, First Army and Fort Carson looked on. The event played to a packed crowd of military, civilian and contractors at the Broadmoor Hall. Twelve enlisted finalists comprised from all the military services from around the Pikes Peak area vied for three top enlisted positions. *Photo by DJ Montoya, 1st Space Brigade*

"Meeting with my fellow finalists, there was definitely some stiff competition. These were really good quality enlisted non-commissioned officers from different services."

As the moment came during Friday's luncheon, Brown was hopeful. His wife Kristen was by his side and very excited, but cautious, prior to the announcement.

"When they called my name I was shocked and then nervous having to go on stage. Everything happened pretty fast."

Brown's supervisor SSG Nicholas Farrand, senior paralegal Noncommissioned Officer for the Command, attended the ceremony and said, "Just as with First Sergeant Steven Adams' win last year in the Senior NCO category, Brown's win in the Year of the NCO is affirmation of the Space Professional/Space Enabler's validity as a Soldier across the full spectrum of NCO leadership competencies."

"It says that USASMDC/ARSTRAT, and the 1st Space Brigade, provide the necessary environment to develop the best, most well-balanced Noncommissioned Officers, of all services, in the Colorado Springs Military Community. His willingness to participate in this competition in this Year of the NCO, even after acceptance to Officer Candidate School and during the final furious weeks of tax season, says that Brown will likely always support, and believe in, the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers."

If there was an edge on Brown's side he pointed to his work by saying, "I guess when I went in front of the board I was very passionate about the tax program."

"I conveyed that to the board members and let them know that it is something I feel very strongly about. I invested a lot of time into it and they could see the benefits as well as I could at that point."

Farrand pointed to the fact that this is the second year that an Army finalist in the E5-E6 category of this competition came from within USASMDC/ARSTRAT - in fact, from within the Chief Counsel Office.

"I'd like to think this will move others to accept that JAG Corps Soldiers are every bit as competent as Warriors and Leaders as those of any other career management field, and that the legal operating environment can be as conducive as any other to the development of Noncommissioned Officer Leaders," Farrand said.

"Last, while it would be selfish of me to linger on this point, it is extremely gratifying to know that I am leading my junior NCOs down the right paths, to success. Two finalists, two years in a row, with an overall winner this year - that kind of result is hard to refute."

According to Brown being a Space Soldier has been a good stepping stone and he hopes to come back to the command. "Maybe even as an FA40 down the road. This is one of the best kept secrets of the Army, for sure!"