

# South Dakota National Guard

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **SD Guardsmen compete to be named best in Army Food Service**

By Sgt. Charles Butler  
SDNG Public Affairs

RAPID CITY, S.D. – The South Dakota Army National Guard’s 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, of Pierre, are putting their cooks on the chopping block against the regions best in a field mess competition.

The 152nd is competing for the annual Philip A. Connelly Award during the 2012 Golden Coyote training exercise in the Black Hills.

The Philip A. Connelly Award was established on March 23, 1968, to recognize excellence in Army Food Service. The program is named for the late Philip A. Connelly, former president of International Food Service Executive Association president, who was responsible for obtaining IFSEA’s sponsorship of the event.

The 152nd is competing in the regional competition against units from the North Dakota and Oregon Army National Guard to determine who will advance to the national level.

Cooks from 152nd established a field kitchen at West Camp Rapid as part of this year’s Golden Coyote exercise. From here, they have fed hundreds of Army National Guard, Reserve and foreign military forces who are training in the area.

The competition judges the mess section in ten categories, to include sanitation, food safety, water safety, non-commissioned officer development, equipment knowledge and maintenance, presentation, portion size, temperature and taste.

This is opportunity is exciting for the 152nd, said 1st Sgt. Eric Jennings, of Rapid City.

“I am very proud of our mess section,” said Jennings. “We started six-to-eight months ago preparing for the state boards. When we won, that got us here to regions and everyone was motivated by that.”

Three judges start the evaluation process four hours before the meal is scheduled to be served. The judges are evaluating the entire field kitchen operation with the goal of the cooks to serve a quality meal to the Soldiers on time.

One of the ways to judge the meal is by what the Soldiers think of it, said retired Chief Warrant Officer Paul Gilmore, the senior evaluator.

“One of the ways we can tell if it was a good meal is we take a look in the garbage can,” said Gilmore. “If the garbage can is full of food we can tell they did something wrong, but if it is only empty plates and cups it must have been a pretty good meal.”

The competition is designed to promote professionalism in the Army Food Service, raise the standards of service, and to recognize the outstanding service provided.

“The cooks are learning how to do their job better,” said Staff Sgt. Jason Christensen, of Elk Point, the food operations sergeant for the 152nd. “It has been a real learning experience for everyone involved.”

Cooking in the field brings with it several challenges that cooks don’t have to face in the kitchen, but the standards are the same, said retired Sgt. Maj. Ray Moser, one of the evaluators.

“The Soldiers are doing a real fine job,” said Moser. “I see a lot of pride in what is being prepared. They are doing well in unison, adapting and working well together.”

The 152nd will find out in July if they will be moving on to the national competition.

“The food service doesn’t get a lot of recognition for a job well done and this is something that provides them with that,” said Moser. “This is something they can be really proud of, even to just compete in the competition its really good for the morale of the group.”

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**120618-A-RN486-001:** Sgt. Jeremie D. Evans, of Pierre, a cook with the 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, South Dakota Army National Guard, prepares chicken breasts at West Camp Rapid near Rapid City, S.D., June 18, 2012, during a regional Philip A. Connelly Award of Excellence in Army Food Service competition. (SDNG photo by Master Sgt. Donald Matthews) (RELEASED)



**120618-A-RN486-002:** Pvt. Angelo M. Anziano, a cook with the 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, South Dakota Army National Guard, prepares marinara sauce at West Camp Rapid near Rapid City, S.D., June 18, 2012, during a regional Philip A. Connelly Award of Excellence in Army Food Service competition. (SDNG photo by Master Sgt. Donald Matthews) (RELEASED)



**120618-A-RN486-003:** Spc. Ashley Jungen, of Sioux Falls, a cook with the 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, South Dakota Army National Guard, serves lunch to Soldiers at West Camp Rapid near Rapid City, S.D., June 18, 2012, during a regional Philip A. Connelly Award of Excellence in Army Food Service competition. (SDNG photo by Master Sgt. Donald Matthews) (RELEASED)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,** please contact Maj. Anthony Deiss at (605) 737-6721 or cell (605) 431-8753, or e-mail [ngsd-pao@ng.army.mil](mailto:ngsd-pao@ng.army.mil).