

Marshal Gore

Hall of Fame Inductee

“Gore gave the agency, a passion for doing the right thing ... He thrived under adversity.”

By Irene Smith

Marshal R. Gore Jr. is a fiscal legend within the fuel community and Defense Logistics Agency.

A World War II veteran and member of “the greatest generation,” Marshall Gore served for 26 years at DLA and retired after 61 years of federal service and 56 years in the petroleum, oil and lubricant community.

Gore enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1942 after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Following his honorable discharge as a sergeant in 1946, he joined the Army Air Force Weather service. In 1951, he was recalled to active duty with the D.C. Air National Guard and transferred to an Air Force unit. After he retired from the Air Force in 1970 as a lieutenant colonel, Gore went to work for a Washington, D.C. retail oil company in 1974.

He began his DLA career in August 1974 as a facilities manager at DLA Energy, when it was located at Cameron Station, Virginia.

His comprehensive fuel experience dates back to 1952, when he served as the petroleum supply officer at Bolling Air Force base in Washington, D.C. He served 19 years as a distribution facilities specialist and in 1986 he was promoted to the Facilities Management branch chief, and retired after 35 years of service in 2009 at the age of 85.

Gore personified the legacy of “the greatest generation.” As described in Tom Brokaw’s 1988 book, “The Greatest Generation,” these men and women fought not for fame and recognition, but because it was the ‘right thing to do.’

As chief of DLA Energy’s Facilities Management branch, Gore oversaw funding for a number of projects, including about 40 fuel terminal operations; international agreements for storage facilities and operation of U.S. portions of overseas pipelines; and privatized automated fuel dispensing facility for ground vehicles located on Army installations.

Tenacity and accountability were the foundations of Gore’s professional life.

Gore wrote petroleum storage requirements for contracts, conducted inspections of fuel terminals, embarked on fact-finding mis-

sions and served in a watchdog/investigator/banker role.

He reviewed contracts to ensure terms and conditions were strictly adhered to in regards to funding. As part of an agency-wide Department of Defense effort to eliminate waste and increase efficiency, Gore reviewed funding documents annually to see which unspent allocated funds under multi-year contracts and Military Interdepartmental Purchase requests could be returned to the organization. In 1999, Gore and his staff deobligated a total of \$50 million from various contractual agreements.

In the mid-1980s, Gore was instrumental in taking over the government-owned and government-operated terminals in Alaska, writing the statement of work for contractors to operate the facilities, and contracting out operations. Between April 1990 and February 1992, Gore traveled nine times to Korea to coordinate the closing of the Trans Korean Pipeline and transfer to the local government.

In 2001, Fuel Lines published a three page profile on Gore written by the magazine’s editor Claire McIntyre.

McIntyre wrote, “Gore believed in auditability before it became the new buzz word. As a steward of the taxpayers’ money, he required the proper documentation for every expense, never just doing it because



someone said to. At the very least, a supervisor was going to put their name on the request and authorize it before he would commit funds.”

A remarkably humble and hardworking man, Gore personified the values of ‘personal responsibility, duty, honor and faith.’

Gore traveled often in the first years of his employment and would use his flight miles to buy his tickets whenever he had enough to cover the expense, because he just felt that was the right thing to do.

When a storage tank in New Hampshire blew up in 1981, killing two people, Gore reported to the facility to investigate. When personnel refused to cooperate initially, he threatened to call in the U.S. marshals. Terminal employees experienced a change in heart and he collected the necessary information.

Gore began his day before anyone else. He arrived every day at 5 a.m. and had to be told when he did not get a reply to his email that most other employees didn’t arrive before 6:30 a.m. He understood the value of money and the great responsibility that came with spending U.S. funds. He was a ‘hard sell,’ reserving his support until thoroughly convinced.

“You can always retreat from no, but never from yes,” was his legendary quote, explaining that it’s much easier to revise a skeptical opinion than to correct prematurely supportive agreements. He never denied a valid request, but he would require supporting documentation, and would vet the requirement prior to approving it.

“I worked closely with Marshall, he was quite the character,” said Cindy Smith, Executive Agent office chief in the Strategic Programs & Initiatives Directorate, who worked with Gore for 18 years.

“Marshall would get a lot of people upset, but it was always because he was so determined,” Smith explained. “Once in a heated argument over funding DFSPs, Marshall called me “uppity.” I felt proud being called that by him, even if I didn’t talk to him for six months afterwards.”

Gore gave the agency a passion for doing the right thing, Smith added. He thrived under adversity. He saw every dime the organization managed as his own money and he was quite the penny pincher.

Gore, at 85, was sharp as a tack, and a tough opinionated, stick-to-the-facts manager according to Smith. He had a soft side though, even if he never wanted anyone to see it.



(Top) Marshall Gore poses for a photograph with his wife. Courtesy photos.

Gore never took a vacation at DLA Energy and would donate his leave to the younger employees in need for medical reasons to help them get back on their feet, anonymously, as he never wanted any praise.

Gore is still remembered to this day as a dedicated DLA employee, patriot and caring human being.

At Gore’s retirement, his co-worker of 30 years and fellow Hall of Fame inductee, John Bartenhagen compared Gore to an English bulldog possessing a similar tenacious and relentless spirit.

“Marshall was always relentless in his pursuit of getting the Department of Defense a fair shake,” Bartenhagen said. ‘It was a privilege and an honor to have worked with him.’



(Right) Gore poses for a photograph while serving in the military. Gore served as DLA Energy Facilities Management branch chief and retired in 2009.

Gore retired from DLA Energy to take care of his sick wife and passed away two months later on April 12, 2009. He and his wife are buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

“I would like to express our thanks for all of the work done to honor my father’s memory and to make us feel comfortable and ‘at home’ during the DLA Energy Hall of Fame Induction ceremony, said Marshall Gore’s son, Robert Gore. “I am sure my father would have been very honored to receive this distinction.” 