

'Best Facility Security/Force Protection Service' plaque goes to the Whitestone Group

In a fitting way to cap off a year of receiving large federal awards, John Clark, Sr., founder and CEO of the Whitestone Group, of Columbus, OH, stepped to the podium on November 29 to pick up GSN's 2012 Award for "Best Facility Security/Force Protection Service."

The busy year for Whitestone got a lot busier for the company in August, when the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) signed a \$104 million contract for Whitestone to provide security services at control towers and airport centers at 34 sites in the agency's Eastern Security Area, which includes Washington, DC, and 10 eastern states. In an interview after the contract was announced, Clark told GSN that although the company offers a wide range of security services -- ranging from facility management and critical infrastructure protection to executive and force protection -- Whitestone has seen a dramatic increase in recent years in its contracts with federal agencies.

Whitestone's growing list of federal clients now includes the Hoover Dam, which signed a new 5-year contract in 2012, NASA, the U.S. Army, U.S. Coast Guard, FEMA, the Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Energy, Social Security Administration and the Departments of Agriculture, Veterans Affairs and Interior.

In the video interview, Clark attributed the success of Whitestone to "the right management at the corporate level and hiring people with knowledge and experience, such as Special Forces veterans." Clark, who describes security services as "a people management business" and is known for tight personnel management, pointed out that Whitestone's 73 site managers supervise mandatory firearms courses and conduct weekly inspections of the apparel, grooming and firearms of each official.

He also stated that Whitestone's training process is intensive and comprehensive, and only those who pass the training are hired, despite that fact that the failure rate in testing can go as high as 30 percent.

Earlier in 2012, Whitestone announced that it had added 137 new workers with military service to its payroll. Clark, a disabled veteran himself, said at the time that veterans bring many different skill sets and experience to the table, such as leadership, discipline, teamwork, advanced knowledge, supervisory skills and an ability to multi-task.

"I've always found that veterans make great employees because of their training and call-to-duty spirit," he said, adding that, "We find that our recruitment and retention efforts are much more successful with this talented group of people."

In addition to Whitestone's entry in the "Best Facility Security/Force Protection" category, Clark was instrumental in nominating the FAA's New York Center in Ronkonkoma, NY, and the FAA TRACON in Westbury, NY, in the "Most Notable Airport/Aviation Security Award" in the Government Excellence group of categories in the 2012 awards program. The two facilities nominated by Whitestone, which were named finalists in the competition, were described by Clark as "the embodiment on how security operations should be conducted."



John Clark, CEO of the Whitestone Group, accepts award in the Best Facility Security category