



Vol. 18, No. 1 State of Hawaii Office of Veterans Services May 2014

# Hawaii Alliance of Student Veterans Seeks to Unite all Student Veterans Across Hawaii

By James M. Cavin  
Executive Director  
Hawaii Alliance of Student  
Veterans'

## Who are we?

As a statewide nonprofit organization exclusively dedicated to the support of veterans in higher education, Hawaii Alliance of Student Veterans' (HASV) role is vital to the success of student veterans pursuing their academic dreams.

We are currently in an era of rapid shifting student demographics. In the wake of the draw downs of both wars, the State is experiencing an increasing shift away from active duty military students toward larger numbers of student veterans, including National Guard and Reserves—a trend that is expected to not only continue, but to accelerate. Thus, an organization that focuses entirely on the academic success of our student veterans, at the State level, will prepare Hawai'i for the future influx of student veterans. Furthermore, HASV seeks to serve our fellow student veterans by facilitating informational exchange, providing access to useful resources, and allowing oversight of a trends and policy developments across a variety of fronts.

As the only State with all five branch commands located within a small geographical area, clustered within a few miles of each other, Hawai'i offers truly unique opportunities for today's student veteran. To place this in context, as of Jan. 2012, these bases employed over forty-two thousand service-mem-

bers and civilians. The veteran population is a staggering eighty-five thousand residing on the island of Oahu alone. Yet, this can be misleading. Despite the geographical proximity of these service members and veterans, there are a surprising number of road blocks along the connecting highways in terms of administration, organization, and concerted action on veterans' issues—a situation perhaps best be symbolized as “red tape around the yellow ribbon.” The list of challenges to navigate can be bewildering, and can include lack of access to in-state tuition for newly separated veterans, inadequate facilities for student veterans on and off campus, lack of a universal Yellow Ribbon Program, and other issues.

## HASV's Mission

HASV's mission is to unite all student veterans across the islands while bringing campus, community, and state awareness to all matters affecting student veterans. Our vision looks at the issues from two angles. First, veterans in the State are a profitable business resource and we recognize that student veterans represent a desirable recruit-



## Addressing Local Issues with Local Solutions

ing pool for educational institutions. In representing a growing sector of the population, development of this pool of veterans should be an important priority for the State. For example, when it comes to student veteran retention at a particular educational institution, is anyone better qualified to offer sound advice than a student veteran? Student veterans can assist colleges in their mission of retention.

But recruitment of student veterans should be accompanied by support of student veterans. The second angle is that “wheels need to be smoothed” for student veterans to progress along the educational rails to arrive at their goals. Facilitating this process is advantageous for both the students and the State. From this point of view, our core focus will be around administration and “smoothing the wheels” for student veterans.

We will cooperate with colleges and universities to develop best practices to  
*Continued on the next page*

# Director's Message

Col.-R Ronald P. Han, Jr.

Director State Office of Veterans Services

Thompson, Glenn  
Marumoto, and  
Joe Lew.

Aloha! By the time you read this newsletter, we've already made it to the second decking and second cross-over of our State legislative bills and resolutions. For those of you who have participated in the process by submitting written and oral testimonies, thank you for the great support! Easiest way to track any measures, just go to HawaiiNetworkofCare.org and link into "Service Members, Veterans, and their Families." Once you get in, there is an upper tab for "legislate" that you can click on for both local and national bills and resolutions. For our State piece (Local), just type in the word "Veterans" and you'll see the Bills pop up.

Again, we're off to a very busy start in 2014! The 50th Commemoration of the Vietnam War State Executive Steering Group (ESG) has been formed and is comprised of Maj Gen Darryll Wong, Maj Gen (Ret) Edward Richardson, Col (Ret) Gene Castagnetti, Lt Col (Ret) Thomas Stirling, and CMSgt (Ret) Caz Ross. The ESG will be forming the 50th Commemoration Committee with neighbor island representation to commence planning for major events to recognize Vietnam Veterans and their loved ones in the years 2015-2017. The Oahu State Office of Veterans Services here at Tripler has undergone a face lift (see pix below) of changing all of our office furniture with 11 system workstations thanks to Dir. Tracey Betts and her team of Aiko Shibuya, Donovan

## Cemetery Projects

We have many cemetery enhancement projects being worked in collaboration with our County counterparts, DAGS, HIENG, and numerous contractors. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we complete these necessary improvements throughout the State. Thanks to Governor Abercrombie, Maj Gen Wong, our State Legislators, and to you, we are currently adding five additional Veterans Benefits Counselors throughout the State in areas where they are needed most. In that regards, please join me in welcoming our newest State counselors: Cherie Gnehm-Wright (Maui), Kii Hursey (Hilo), and Roddy Sueoka (Hilo). Under the leadership of John Condello, our goal is to fill the remainder of the counselor positions by July 2014.

There are many behind the scenes organizations doing some amazing work. Here are a few:

- State Women's Military Veterans Task Force turned into a sub-committee under the State Advisory Board;
- State Gulf War Memorial Task Force published a 104 page legislative summary;
- Completion of the Triennial Review and Assessment of our Memorials by key representatives from each island;
- And the emphasis to support Student Veterans as with the University



**Former OVS Dir. Col. Bob Viduya, received a shadow box from his family.**

of Hawaii Task Force on Services for Student Veterans. There is much work in progress and much more to be accomplished for our Veterans and their families. Thank you for your support and kokua!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**May 26** - Mayor's Memorial Day: Punchbowl, 0800-1100 hrs;

**May 26** - Governor's Memorial Day Ceremony: Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery in Kaneohe, 1245 hrs-1430 hrs.

**June 14-28** - Tropic Care Health Services Support by the US Army Reserves to Kauai, Veterans Stand Down being planned in concert with this

**July 4** - Korean 60th Commemorative Recognition Certificate Ceremonies on Kauai and Hawaii being planned: Kauai, Hawaii: TBD

**Aug. 16** - Na Koa Wounded Warrior Canoe Regatta (Ft DeRussey beach grounds)

**Aug. 15** - Military/Veterans Job Fair (Hale Koa)



**Before**



**After**

**The Before and After photos of the Office of Veterans Services new configuration of the Tripler office space.**

*Photos by Ronald Han & Jayme Sato*

# Update your information for the Hawaii Veteran Newsletter

Cut out and mail responses in a stamped envelope to:

Office of Veterans Services  
ATTN: HI VETERAN NEWSLETTER  
459 Patterson Road  
E-Wing, Room 1-A103  
Honolulu, HI 96819-1522

Or email us at:  
jnagamine@ovs.hawaii.gov

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I would enjoy a FREE copy of the Hawaii Veteran Newsletter. Please add me to your mailing list. *You do not need to send this portion in if you are currently receiving the newsletter.*

Update information, change my old address to my new address

No thanks, Please remove me from your mailing list.

Old Address

New Address

## Maui Veterans Cemetery Projects

“Aloha to the families, friends and visitors to the Maui Veterans Cemetery,

We are pleased to announce that there are two projects slated for the Maui Veterans Cemetery, the intent of which is to improve, enhance and beautify portions of the current cemetery and expand its overall size. The ultimate intent is for the cemetery to eventually achieve “Shrine Status”, meaning that it will conform to the requirements of the Department of Veterans Affairs/National Cemetery Administration (VA/NCA) standards of design and construction.

The first project is the “Gravesite Restoration”, which will begin on-site work after Memorial Day. This project will enhance approximately 3 of the cemetery’s 7-acre property, and will include the cleaning, readjustment, an realignment of approximately 1,500 grave markers, along with leveling of the ground irregularities, re-grassing, elimination of the asphalt walkway on the Eastern portion of the cemetery, and miscellaneous landscape improvement.

The second project is the “Expansion” of the cemetery, which will add 10-acres of the adjacent land to the cemetery property. This project, antici-

pated to begin in 2015, subject to release of federal funds, will include improvements to the cemetery entry off of Baldwin avenue, relocation and expansion of the parking lot, construction of a new circulation roadway (which will accommodate additional parking along its curb), construction of approximately 450 in-ground burial crypts and 230 in-ground burial cremains, construction of a new Maintenance Yard, and grassing/irrigation improvements.

Notice of these projects will be disseminated via the island newspapers, and an informational flyer providing additional detail and diagrams of these projects will be posted at the Committal Shelter.

We apologize in advance for any inconvenience these projects may create during the term of the construction operations and appreciate the public’s understanding and support in following posted safety signs and advisories.

All efforts will be made to keep the public informed of any changes should they occur. Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Lloyd Maki, Asst. Chief Engineering Officer, State of Hawai‘i Dept. of Defense at (808) 733-8441.

## Hawaii Alliance Student Veterans’

*Continued from front page*

alleviate bureaucracy; to facilitate integration across administrative silos; to connect/collaborate with student veteran facilitators and student veterans/chapters on suitable transition training programs and to advocate and implement veteran- helpful programs and policies to keep student veterans feeling safe and able to complete their educational goals.

HASV recognizes that universities and colleges in Hawai‘i have a unique advantage over other campuses on the mainland. Our local culture needs to be more closely integrated with our student veterans’ culture so that all can share in the economic advantages.

HASV will strive to provide the best possible leadership for making sure our student veterans get the education that they earned, graduate, and garner meaningful employment throughout Hawai‘i.

We are excited and humbled by all the support and if you have a question, or would like to collaborate on our strategic goals, please email [info@Hawaiiistudentvets.org](mailto:info@Hawaiiistudentvets.org). Stay up to date with your student veteran ohana at [www.facebook.com/HIStudentVeterans](http://www.facebook.com/HIStudentVeterans) and follow us on Twitter @Histudentvets.

# Veteran to Farmer Training Program

By Sonny Shimaoka

The “Farming for the Working Class” and partner “Veteran to Farmer” programs create an active, hands-on approach to educate new farmers with innovative techniques that allow them to keep a full time job while running a successful farm. During the first semester, participants and a family member will be provided an opportunity to be involved in a highly successful greenhouse farm operation as well as classroom work and assignments on every aspect of farming.

The second semester is dedicated to participant families establishing their own farm operation on their property while being mentored on running their farm business as a profitable income deriving entity. The class concludes on developing skills to pass on their acquired knowledge to the next participant families as trainers and mentors.

## Upon completing the first year of this program, participants will:

- Gain a working knowledge farming principles and background information

including plant biology, soils and nutrients, integrated pest management, and cultivation techniques;

- Employ newly acquired knowledge of a greenhouse production system by planning, ordering, permitting, constructing, and operating a greenhouse on their own property and assisting other participants in construction;

- Evaluate, then cultivate a crop of their choice with appropriate production practices including proper germination technique and timing, pest management, fertilization and irrigation, and harvesting;

- Create a business plan for their farm that includes an operation plan, market evaluation, sales strategy, and financial projections;

- Apply their knowledge of agriculture and business learned during their on-farm training to begin farming their own property;

- Produce, market, and sell a crop of their choice and

- Operate their new farm business using good business practices which includes acquiring a business license

and tax ID, basic bookkeeping and accounting, marketing, sales, and paying taxes.

## Upon completing the second year of this program, participants will:

- Participate in monthly hui to share and discuss their success and challenges with other participants;

- Continue to operate their greenhouse and manipulate their practices to optimize production and reduce costs

- Apply knowledge of food safety and proper harvesting technique;

- Examine opportunities for value added products;

- Attend optional workshops on farm risk management, cooperative business options, employee management and payroll taxes, farm taxes and farm deductions, and food safety, funding options (grants, loans, etc.), support services (USDA, CTHR, etc.);

- Evaluate the benefits of food safety certification and if preferred, begin food safety certification and

- Assist the new cohort of students with the creation of their farms.



Thank you to the 45th Sustainment Brigade and the 1-21st Infantry, 25th Infantry Division from Schofield Barracks for your hard work and dedication. You continue to serve our veterans at the Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery.



Photos by Willie Hirokane

# Veterans Day - A Day to Remember



**By SgtMaj Tony Elliott USMC (Ret.)  
Hawai'i Office of Veterans Services  
Counselor - Kauai**

Veterans Day is a day to remember what makes America so special. It is also a day that binds America together through parades, school activities, speeches and family cook-outs.

We remember that as citizens of the greatest nation in the world we have a civic duty to help our neighbors who may be less fortunate. And we remember that when we see poverty and hopelessness in far away country's we should not look "away" because of their race or politics, but instead look for "a way" to help them because they too are our neighbors.

We remember that except for our actions which reflect a deep abiding love for and devotion to our country, patriotism is just a word on our tongue.

We remember that freedom is precious and must be protected. And above all, we remember that we entered this world with freedom given to us and what happens afterwards is our own re-

sponsibility. Yes, on Veterans Day we remember all of these things. But most importantly, we pause to celebrate the bravery of 25 million American's - those mothers and fathers, daughters and sons, our neighbors and friends who stepped forward when our nation needed them the most.

On Veterans Day we celebrate all who have worn our country's uniform - in war and peace. We celebrate their exalted courage to stand firmly in the face of fear and say: "No, you will not triumph here for we are proud and we are strong and we stand united against you and all others that may follow. We are American's... we are the defenders of freedom... we are Veterans!"

On Veterans Day, the American people unite to thank you for your service and honor



**From Left to Right - Wilbert Pereira, Ed Keoho Sr., John Iwamoto and Royce Ebesu enjoying the start of the Kauai Veterans Day Ceremony.**

you for your sacrifices. And just as you have faithfully fulfilled your responsibilities to us, we too will fulfill our obligation to you. In your honor, we pledge to always display our American Flag proudly and to guard and respect her at all times because the raising of this flag each day symbolizes freedom to all who look upon her, and reassures us all that freedom will prevail.



**Stanley & Judy Segawa on the left, Mayor Bernard P. Carvalho Jr. in the back and Gusti & Quentin Belles on the right.**



**Gov. Abercrombie and Maj. Gen. Wong present a certificate of appreciation to Gene Castagnetti for his services to veterans at the Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery at Kaneohe.**

*Photos by Aida Cruz*

*Photo by Andrew Jackson*

**Gov. Neil Abercrombie**  
Commander in Chief

**Maj. Gen. Darryll D.M. Wong**  
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## Hawaii Veteran Newsletter

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## Vietnam Veteran Robert Cox awarded Bronze Star



**U.S. Rep. Tulsi Gabbard presented Vietnam veteran Robert Cox with a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart for injuries he just found out about two years ago. Doctors told Cox that there was shrapnel lodged in his left thigh. Cox has already received 2 Bronze Stars for his service in Vietnam as a sergeant in the 4th Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment.**

*Photo by Cox Family*