



HAWAII VETERAN

STATE OF HAWAII OFFICE OF VETERANS' SERVICES

Maui natives honored for their 'Exceptionally Meritorious Service Beyond Service'

On March 29, 2026, National Vietnam War Veterans Day, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) presented their inaugural "Service Beyond Service Award" to a handful of Vietnam veterans in a ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. The VVMF recognized these Vietnam veterans for their contributions and volunteer service in their community, state and country.

The two Hawai'i recipients made



Thomas Duarte held his certificate alongside Jim Knotts, President and CEO/COO of VVMF.

the lengthy trip to our nation's capital despite short notice of the presentation. They joined 26 fellow Vietnam veterans from around the country, all part of the inaugural class of 49 awardees.

U.S. Army veterans Thomas Duarte, also known as "Uncle Tommy," and Cummins K. Mahoe III., also known as "Bo," both from Wailuku, Maui, attended. All 28 veterans in attendance received certificates for their "Exceptionally Meritorious Service Beyond Service" in their respective communities. Jim Knotts, President and CEO/COO of VVMF, hosted the ceremony.

In addition to the certificate, each recipient's Service Beyond Service is highlighted on the VVMF's Registry of Vietnam and Vietnam Era Veterans website (www.vvmf.org/News/Vietnam-Veterans-Memorial-Fund-Announces-2026-SBS-Award-Recipients/). The event concluded as awardees joined Knotts for a wreath-laying at the apex of Vietnam Veterans Memorial, known as "The Wall," including a hand salute during the playing of Taps.



Cummins Mahoe III. and Thomas Duarte after the ceremony in Washington, D.C.

(Photos courtesy Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund)

Mahoe currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Nisei Veterans Memorial Center (WWII), the Korean War Veterans Maui No Ka Oi Chapter #282 and the Maui County Veterans Council (MCVC). He is a member of multiple veteran organizations throughout Hawai'i. Mahoe volunteered as a Maui Veterans Court mentor for five years and administered the Veteran-In-Need fund for the MCVC, providing immediate financial aid to Maui

Maui natives honored for their volunteer service



Retired Maj. Gen. (Dr.) Sharon R. Bannister U.S. Air Force, presented Cummins Mahoe III. with his certificate at the ceremony. (Photo courtesy Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund)

County veterans with minimal red tape and without delay.

Duarte switched from the U.S. Army's OD (Olive Drab) uniform to the uniform worn by the Maui Fire Department. As a first responder, he climbed to the rank of fire chief, a leadership role that paralleled his Army Officer rank as a Captain.

A proud alumnus of Saint Anthony School Maui, Duarte has coached student-athletes for many years. Last year, with the assistance of Mahoe and fellow veteran, Joey Fernandez, they met with the faculty, the PTA, and the student body to teach proper drill and ceremony for the daily ritual of raising and lowering of the flags on campus.

Duarte continues to counsel troubled veterans in Maui's Veterans Court program. A man of many hats - captain, chief, coach and counselor -, Duarte was a natural choice for the Service Beyond Service Award.

The special day was filled with alo-

ha, sunshine, blue skies and cherry blossoms in full bloom. During a morning event at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, known as "The Wall," the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) held a wreath-laying ceremony featuring remarks from Tom Burke, national president of the Vietnam Veterans of America;



Thomas Duarte and Cummins Mahoe III. gathered in front of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, known as "The Wall," in Washington D.C. (Photo courtesy Karen Mahoe)

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth; and VA Secretary Doug Collins.

At noon, veterans participated in a homecoming walk from the World War II Memorial along the Reflection Pool to the Lincoln Memorial, followed by the Service Beyond Service Award ceremony at 1 p.m. A tribute concert featuring Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band closed the day's program. The band performed in Hawai'i in August 2025 at Ford Island.

The nomination period for the 2027 Service Beyond Service Award is currently open through Jan.31, 2027. More information and instructions are posted on their website (www.vvmf.org/Service-Beyond-Service-Award/).

Uncle Tommy and Bo thank you very much for all that you do for your community!

Daniel Kahikina Akaka State Veterans Home

Since opening in May 2025, the Daniel K. Akaka State Veterans Home has been proud of serving those who served the nation. The home currently houses 80 veterans and has 40 available beds for qualified veterans.

The home provides a skilled nursing level of care for eligible veterans, with a full range of services designed to support health, comfort and quality of life, including:

- 24-hour professional nursing care
- Rehabilitation services, including physical, occupational and speech therapy
- Activities and social programs
- Nutritious, well-balanced meals prepared daily

Veterans who served on active duty for at least one day may qualify for residency. Our team is happy to guide veterans and their families



The Daniel K. Akaka State Veterans Home is located in Kapolei, O'ahu.

through the eligibility and admission process.

If you or someone you know is a veteran who may benefit from skilled nursing care, learn more about the home by:

- Scheduling a tour
- Asking about eligibility
- Referring a veteran
- Learning about upcoming services

Contact Tiana in our admissions department for more information. She can provide guidance to help veterans and their loved ones find the appropriate care.

Tiana.sula@dkasvh.org
808.766.1495 (cell)
808.751.3272 (office)

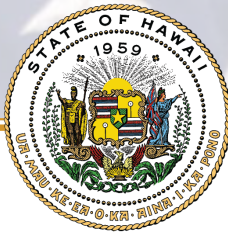
It is our honor to care for those who have served.



The common living room-dining and shared kitchen areas at the Daniel K. Akaka State Veterans Home. (Photos by Jayme Nagamine)



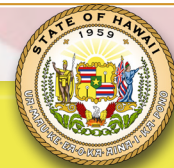
Tiana Sula gives Gov. Josh Green, M.D. a tour of the Daniel K. Akaka State Veterans Home.



**The Honorable Josh Green,
Governor of the State of Hawai‘i**
cordially invites you to attend the
Memorial Day Ceremony
on Monday, the twenty-fifth of May, two thousand twenty-six
at one o’clock in the afternoon
at the Hawai‘i State Veterans’ Cemetery
45-349 Kamehameha Highway, Kāne‘ohe, Hawai‘i

Aloha Attire

Musical prelude: by 111th Army Band



**STATE OF HAWAI‘I
OFFICE OF VETERANS’
SERVICES**

**459 Patterson Road
E-Wing, Room 1-A103
Honolulu, HI 96819-1522**

**Governor Josh Green
*Commander in Chief***

**Major General
Stephen F. Logan
*The Adjutant General***

**Lieutenant Colonel
John P. Alamodin
*OVS Director***

**Jayme Nagamine
*Editor***



*Veterans participating in the Governor’s Memorial Day Ceremony carrying flags and lei.
(Photo by Jayme Nagamine)*

Wellness Survey Available - The information we gain from this survey will help create veteran-focused policy and advocacy

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN COMMUNITIES SPEAK UP?



**Policy Changes ~ Stronger Programs
Bolder Advocacy ~ More Resources**

Take the second Hawai'i Quality of Life Survey TODAY to help improve Hawai'i residents' quality of life!

Health-study.com



Child & Adolescent Mental Health Division

Researchers at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Health Policy Initiative, in partnership with the Hawai'i Office of Wellness and Resilience, invite you to participate in the **2026 Hawai'i Quality of Life Survey**. This anonymous, **10-20 minute** survey is for **Hawai'i residents 18+ years old** and asks about everyday experiences related to health and wellbeing, work, educa-

tion, cost of living, and more.

It builds on a similar 2024 survey, the results of which were turned into a public [Dashboard](#) used by policymakers, state agencies, and community organizations to improve quality of life in Hawai'i. Broad participation helps ensure the findings reflect Hawai'i's diverse communities and experiences.

For more information, visit:

www.health-study.com or email Jack Barile (barile@hawaii.edu) or Eva McKinsey (evamckin@hawaii.edu).

Please take the 2026 Survey, open until May 31, 2026.

OFFICE OF VETERANS' SERVICES STATE OF HAWAII



VISIT TO SERVE MOLOKA'I VETERANS

Chelsea Fernandez
President of the Maui County Veterans Council
will also be present to talk about the needs of Moloka'i veterans.

FRIDAY

May 15th, 2026

7:30am to 3:30pm

Moloka'i Veterans Caring for Veterans Center

81 Kaunakakai Place
Kaunakakai, HI 96748

**PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICE
TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT**

WALK-INS CAN BE SEEN AFTER 1:00PM (TIME PERMITTING)

State of Hawai'i – Maui Office of Veterans' Services
333 Dairy Road, Suite # 203
Kahului, HI 96732

Phone: (808) 369-3541

Email: MOVS@hawaii.gov