

## Guardmember Spotlight: MAJ Manuel Llanes

[Off the Hawaii Army National Guard Facebook page](#)

In any event or emergency where the National Guard is requested to respond, a devoted group is tasked to ensure that plans to sustain the troops during their activation are executed in a timely manner, are accurate, and accounted for.

Maj. Manuel Llanes heads this devoted force behind the scenes. As team lead for the 1950th Contingency Contracting Team (CCT), Hawaii Army National Guard, he oversees five contractors dedicated to taking care of the Hawaii National Guard Joint Task Force (HING JTF) troops. CCT supports all contracting within a contingent environment involving military operations in reaction to natural disasters, humanitarian aid, and stability operations.

“I’m the chief of the contracting office,” said Llanes. “We can also get assigned to other elements like the Army, Air, and Navy.”

What exactly does “contracting” in the military mean? They’re the organization who coordinates the lodging reservations, meals, transportation, and whatever else is needed to complete the mission.

The 1950th CCT has also supported the contracting and construction of several buildings across local military installations in Hawaii.

“So, when you fly into Hickam and you see the teal roofs over Hickam, those are the construction buildings that we have put together,” said Llanes.

To be effective at caring for troops during any activation, the CCT works closely with local businesses and vendors to accomplish the needs and goals of the mission. Not every supply issue or “fix” can be accomplished with military assets. There are multiple options out in the community that can solve these challenges.

“About 80 to 90 % of all our purchases for the Hawaii National Guard, both Army and Air, are with small businesses on the islands,” stated Llanes. “We bring government wealth into the island.”

The COVID-19 pandemic struck the Hawaii economy hard, affecting numerous businesses and many people’s livelihoods. With 1,200 Hawaii Guardsmen activated in April, and about 800 in June, Llanes and his team maintain their support to the JTF and continue to contract with local vendors on multiple islands.

“We have been working with about 38 vendors,” said Llanes. “Relationships have been good.”

As the days continue to pass and we all look forward to the world returning to whatever normalcy will be, Llanes has a strong message for all communities across the islands.

“I believe the National Guard is one of their best assets. We are their friends; and we are here to help them out,” said Llanes.

The Hawaii National Guard relies on the efforts of its 1950th CCT unit and their relationships with local businesses.

“In the contracting field, we are here to provide the most amount of small business partnerships that we possibly can, to assist the backbone of the United States and that’s the small businesses,” said Llanes.