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YCA Hilo Grad - Page - 17

Hawai'i Youth Challenge Academy holds first in-person graduation since COVID-19, receives accreditation | *Courtesy Story | Thursday May 26, 2022*

Thursday May 26, the Hawai'i Youth Challenge Academy at Kalaheo was proud to recognize the accomplishments of its 83 graduates from Class 56 at the Academy's first in-person graduation ceremony since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Class 56 is also the program's first graduating class in Hawai'i to leave the program with a 100% post-program employment rate, and official accreditation status by Cognia, which represents 21,800 public and private education systems across the United States.

"You are here tonight because of your determination and strength to get things done, for yourself and others," said First Lady of Hawai'i Dawn Amano-Ige, who opened the ceremony. "You have made our community a better place through your restoration and conservation projects. The work you did contributes to a more sustainable Hawai'i and preserves our community."

Some of the notable achievements of the 83 cadets of Class 56 include 500 hours of academics (per cadet), 4,728 collective hours of community service, volunteering at events for veterans, and inaugural Youth Empowerment events at Kuhio Park Towers and Pāloalo Valley Homes, where more than 1,000 pounds of food, household goods, and clothing were distributed to underserved families.

"What is important for each of you to know is that you have given yourselves a second chance. Each of you has the potential to achieve greatness, to be anything you want to be," said Congressman Kai Kahele, who was also in attendance. "And from this day forward, never look back. Set your sights on the next horizon, the next great challenge, and be the person you want to be."

With each cadet having obtained employment or enlisting in military service before graduating, they will be well-equipped for future endeavors, leaving the program with their American Red Cross CPR/First Aid and AED and OSHA certifications. Some cadets also became certified as American Red Cross Lifeguard Professional Rescuers, forklift operators, and in culinary exploration. The Academy's new accreditation status also means that current and future cadets will have more options when it comes to career paths.

"Accreditation means meeting high-quality standards at all times with contemporary perspectives to give our students the best educational opportunities," said Bruce Oliveira, Director of Civil-Military Programs for the State of Hawai'i Department of Defense. "YCA accreditation means our graduates have greater access to federal loans, scholarships, higher education, and military programs that require education from an accredited school."

Following graduation, Cadet Ioane, who aspires to work in the culinary field, received an award from First Lady Ige at Washington Place on Friday, May 27th, for his Sweet Potato Pot Pie recipe. Developed for the Hawai'i Team Nutrition Local Recipe contest, which is part of the National School Lunch Program, the recipe will be integrated into school lunch menus in an effort to highlight the diverse cuisines of Hawai'i that contribute to the state's unique cultural landscape.

The Youth Challenge Academy's mission during its 22-week in-residency program is to intervene in and reclaim the lives of 16-18 year-olds who have left traditional high school settings, teaching them values, life skills, education, and self-discipline necessary to succeed as productive citizens. This award-winning program has been recognized as one of the nation's most effective and cost efficient programs for targeting youth who are at the greatest risk for substance abuse, teen pregnancy, delinquency, and criminal activity. The 22-week Residential Phase is followed by a year-long mentoring relationship with a specially trained member from each youth's community.

[View the graduation ceremony video here:](#)



LGBTQIA+ Pride Month: Path to Acceptance

117th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (Hawaii) | Wednesday, June 1, 2022

June is Pride Month, where LGBTQIA+ communities around the world celebrate the freedom of being themselves. The Hawai'i Army National Guard (HIARNG) recognizes and celebrates its diverse force by sharing their stories.

Serving and living in Hawai'i where acceptance and inclusion are part of living the "Aloha" lifestyle, things are much more comfortable for someone within the LGBTQIA+ community now compared to more than a decade ago.

"I enlisted after 'don't ask, don't tell' (DADT) ended and today you can see the importance of Pride Month and how it really impacts service members," said Spc. Casandra B. Ancheta, a Mass Communications Specialist with the HIARNG. "Especially those who have served through that era."

Ancheta initially enlisted in the 111th Army Band in 2016. Although she was not outspoken about her sexuality, she did not feel the need to hide anything in the HIARNG.

"I didn't feel like if people were to find out about my sexuality, I'd feel worried about being scrutinized, ostracized or being chaptered out," said Ancheta. "They would just go on about their day and treat me the same way they've been treating me."

During the 17 years the DADT was in place, from 1994 to 2011, the policy prohibited service members from being open about their sexual orientation. Openness about being a member of the LGBTQIA+ community could result in being discharged from service.

U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Theresa E. Gualdarama, a Chief Public Affairs NCO who enlisted in the HIARNG in 1999, recalls serving in fear during the years DADT was still in effect.

"We couldn't be an individual," said Gualdarama. "We had to try and be somebody

else, and navigating that was difficult."

Gualdarama felt like she and Soldiers like her had to keep to themselves.

"We had our own little group of people who we knew were just like me, so that's where we thrived," said Gualdarama. "Outside of that, we couldn't say anything for fear of being reported higher."

It was a challenging time for Gualdarama during the DADT policy.

"When I was coming up in the Guard, everything was hush-hush," said Gualdarama. "If an investigation was opened against an individual, there was a potential for them to be chaptered out."

The DADT policy was repealed on September 20, 2011. Gualdarama remembers that day with disbelief. As she recounted, it was a glorious day for all.

"I honestly didn't think they were gonna pass it and it's going to be years before it'll be repealed," said Gualdarama. "When it did pass, I got phone calls from everybody and their mama celebrating this milestone with me. It was a breath of fresh air. I could finally be myself."

Gualdarama saw an immediate positive change and felt like a weight was lifted off her shoulders.

"All I wanted was to be accepted," said Gualdarama. "To see diversity celebrated in all aspects and being able to freely express myself in the organization I dedicated my life to was indescribable."

As the years passed, Gualdarama could see and feel the impact of the repeal.

"The one thing the Army did right was recognize that there was a problem that needed

to be fixed," said Gualdarama. "It is way better now, more accepting, more awareness. It's much more of a positive environment now than it was back then."

The military has taken huge strides in the positive direction for inclusion and acceptance of people who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community and embracing diversity in and out of uniform.

"Pride Month isn't about you. It's about everyone in the community and spreading awareness," Ancheta said. "It's their chance to have representation and to have a voice and to know that who they are is being represented and it's okay."

Gualdarama loves being a Soldier who is allowed to be herself, in the Hawai'i Army National Guard and commits herself to helping others thrive.

"We all have to be on the same page and promote love, which is what Hawai'i tries to do," said Gualdarama. "I do hope we can continue to promote positivity and thrive, all it takes is one act of kindness to save someone, be that light."



The future site of the 293rd Electromagnetic Warfare Squadron on Pacific Missile Range Facility, Kauai, Hawaii, May 25, 2022. A SATAF brings together experts from a multitude of agencies and allows them to convene specific working groups that deal with issues such as maintenance, personnel, operations, facilities and communication. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Master Sgt. Andrew Lee Jackson)

Building a road map towards space mission

State of Hawaii, Department of Defense, Public Affairs Office | Story by Master Sgt. Andrew Jackson
 Wednesday, May 25, 2022

A team of Airmen from the National Guard Bureau (NGB) and the Hawai'i Air National Guard (HIANG) recently met on Kauai to conduct a Site Activation Task Force (SATAF) visit for the 293rd Electromagnetic Warfare Squadron. This SATAF process is the first step in the future space unit's activation process. The NGB team of about 20 guardsmen and civilian contractors, the HIANG and the Guam Air National Guard (GUANG) held a set of discussions over three days aimed at generating an extensive checklist that will guide the unit through the activation process.

"Through the SATAF process, NGB partners with the unit and its stakeholders to create a road map from step 1 to step 1001," said Mr.

Robert Novak, conversion program manager, NGB. "NGB uses the SATAF process to modernize the Guard. We are here on Kauai to stand up space control squadron #4, and the SATAF process is used to convert a unit from one mission to another. We are activating a new weapons system for the HIANG in a new unit (293rd EWS). We are starting from scratch. This will lay the path from where we are now to being a fully functional unit in the next 18 months."



Lt. Col. Chad Briggs, commander, Hawai'i Air National Guard Headquarters Det 1, briefs the Site Activation Task Force (SATAF) on his vision and goals for the future space unit, Pacific Missile Range Facility, Kauai, Hawaii, May 23, 2022. A SATAF brings together experts from a multitude of agencies and allows them to convene specific working groups that deal with issues such as maintenance, personnel, operations, facilities and communication. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Master Sgt. Andrew Lee Jackson)

"My vision for the unit is Hawaiian concept 'Kulia I Ka Nu'u' (reach for the summit) which is a way of life. We always strive to do a little better each time." Lt. Col. Chad Briggs, 293rd Commander

During the SATAF, representatives from the HIANG and NGB staff shops including: A1 personnel, A2 intelligence, A3 operations, A4 facilities and logistics, A5 plans, and A6 communications, spent three days inspecting the site, reviewing manning documents, examining Air Force Instructions, analyzing the current infrastructure, and looking a current

mission needs of similar units with similar weapons systems. These discussions are held to generate checklists that will define every action taken over the next year and half. Support agreements were also outlined between the 293rd, HIANG Headquarters, the 154th Wing, the Hawai'i Army National Guard and Pacific Missile Range Facility. Every aspect of the unit infrastructure, from the unit manning document and spend plans, to blueprints and weapons systems were discussed.

"We are here to stand up a new unit here in the Hawai'i Air National Guard with a new Space Weapons System," stated Senior Master Sgt. Jarrod Best, unit conversion mission program manager, Air National Guard Readiness Center.

"The standup mission starts by holding meetings with subject matter experts from the unit, NGB, and PRMF. It is the balance of all the team members working together cohesively. The final product will be an extensive task list that will need to be accomplished to reach Initial Operational Capability (IOC). We are setting an 18-month timeline, it could be extended to 24 months if needed."

The Kauai-based HIANG unit will be nested on PMRF. The plan is to renovate a 6.5-acre section that had previously been occupied by the HIANG's 293rd Combat Communications Squadron. Renovating some structures will help keep the overall cost down which is key in a resource-limited environment.

"The facilities team will play a big role here for the renovation of this site at PRMF," said Best. "Whether that is Sustainment, Restoration, Modernization (SRM) or Military Construction (MilCon) funds. The work will really be done after we leave here. SATAF kicks off everything but, the 293rd (EWS) commander and his staff will be tracking each action item's progress and submitting reports every three months."

Every member of the task force from the HIANG and NGB will stay with the process

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pūpū kahi

popukahi: "harmoniously united"



Hawai'i Army National Guard Soldiers from Detachment 1, Golf Company, 1st Battalion, 189th Aviation Regiment and Detachment 1, Golf Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment, use medevac techniques to rescue simulated victims during a training exercise at Hilo, Hawaii, June 12, 2022. The medevac operations were a joint effort by flight operations, UH-60 helicopter repairers, petroleum supply specialists, flight crew chief, flight paramedics, pilots and U.S. Air Force weather forecasters. (U.S. Army National Guard photos by Pfc. Tonia Ciancanelli)



Hawaii Army National Guard Sgt. Jervin Bersalona, a combat paramedic, assigned to Detachment 1, Golf Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment, 103d Troop Command, instructs Soldiers in Tier 2: Combat Life Saver (CLS) Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) at Waiawa Armory in Pearl City, Hawaii, June 8, 2022. CLS training provided Soldiers with the opportunity to learn a higher level of care than Tier 1: All Service Members TCCC training. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Tonia Ciancanelli)

More Than a Medic

117th Army Public Affairs | Story by Sgt Lianne Hirano

Hawai'i Army National Guard (HIARNG) Sgt. Jervin Bersalona, a combat paramedic assigned to Detachment 1, Golf Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment, 103rd Troop Command, became one of the first HIARNG Soldiers to graduate the Joint Base San Antonio Army Medical Department Center of Excellence Combat Paramedic Program (CPP) as a critical care flight paramedic.

The CPP is a rigorous 11-month, three-phase program specialized for combat medics. The program included combat casualty assessments, damage control resuscitations, prolonged field care, dental and treatment of K-9s.

It was designed to prepare combat medic specialists for the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician Paramedic examination to have an extended scope of practice designed to meet the needs of current and future operating environments.

Bersalona, a native of the Province of Abra, Philippines, moved to Ewa Beach, Hawai'i at 10 years old and joined the HIARNG as a combat medic in 2013.

"I wanted to be a part of something bigger than myself," said Bersalona. "I wanted to challenge myself to make a

difference during times of crisis, whether it's during a state mission or deployment."

Barcelona said that one of the biggest challenges of being an Army National Guard Soldier who performs one weekend a month drill is the lack of training opportunities.

"I just wish that I knew what I know now, as far as opportunities and how far you can take your career," said Bersalona.

He wanted to train more than just one weekend a month.

"One of the reasons I became a critical care flight paramedic is to add more tools to my belt," said Bersalona.

Bersalona is also a Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC) instructor. He recently instructed a combat lifesaver course (CLS) along with Staff Sgt. Onassis Aris and Spc. Christopher Kelly, for 17 HIARNG Soldiers, who at the end of the course earned CLS certification.

"I really enjoy being a CLS instructor. I think it is great to meet people from different walks of life that are not in the medical field," said Bersalona.

"Teaching them what I know now and the mistakes I've made is gonna have a greater outcome

when it's time to actually use what they are taught," said Bersalona. "If there's no medic around you might be the one saving someone's life."

Aris recalled Bersalona volunteered to provide medical support to the Fire Support Team (FST) at Pohakuloa Training Area (PTA) on Hawai'i Island during his first annual training with the 1st Battalion, 487th Field Artillery Regiment, 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team as a private first class.

"For a young medic, to have the determination, professionalism and passion to provide medical support is commendable," said Aris. "We've trained together numerous times from Ft. Camp Roberts in California, Schofield Barracks on Oahu and PTA on the Big Island. Sgt. Bersalona is a reliable and competent medic."

Bersalona recommends this path for people wanting an introduction to a career in the medical field.

"Medics can go anywhere and to any unit," said Bersalona. "The training you get now as a medic is more advanced compared to when I went. Medicine is always evolving."

He now works as a paramedic for American Medical Response.

"I became a combat paramedic

the same time I graduated paramedic school," said Bersalona. "I enjoy my job and being in the medical field. It makes me feel good that I have the tools and knowledge to help someone on their worst days."

Bersalona deployed to Afghanistan in 2019 as a combat medic with the 1-487th Field Artillery.

"A lot of the patients that I encountered, especially the national forces, were grateful that we were there and doing what we were deployed to do," said Bersalona. "I felt very fulfilled that I was actually there doing my job."

Bersalona's professional goal within the HIARNG is to become a physician's assistant in emergency medicine. He encourages anyone interested in becoming a combat medic with the HIARNG to not live in fear and get out of their comfort zone.

"Sometimes you find out your true self and who you really are when you are under stress, anxiety and fear," said Bersalona. "I've met a lot of people that guided and led me to the right path."



Iron Majors - MAJ Sheryl Bolido (65C), MAJ Peter Doyle (65B), MAJ Laura Dy (65A), MAJ Stephanie Fournier (65B), MAJ Steven Hurtle (65D), MAJ Nicholas Koreerat (65B), MAJ Bryan Lee (65D), MAJ Mark Mateja (65B), and MAJ Joshua Radi (65D) all participated in the Army Medical Iron Majors' professional development last week.

maturity, and incredible work ethics far exceed the standards. The level of performance and behavior Radi has displayed reflects that I only expect from the best Army Officers."

Ross said Radi has demonstrated an eagerness to be a leader not only in the AMSC and greater AMEDD community, but also for the Army in clinical, education, research, tactical, operational, and strategic capacities.

"Radi is a tremendous asset and shining example of pure AMEDD excellence," said Ross. "He will be an invaluable asset to the AMEDD and the Army for many years to come."

HIARNG Soldier Selected as AMEDD Iron Major

State of Hawaii, Department of Defense, Public Affairs Office | Story by Bernhard Lashleyleidner

Maj. Joshua Radi, a physician assistant in the Hawai'i Army National Guard (HIARNG), was one of nine medical officers selected to attend the Army Medical Iron Majors Week Post-Professional Short Course Program, a week-long virtual course from March 28 to April 1.

The Iron Major award identifies Army Medical Department (AMEDD) Soldiers, in the ranks of captain promotable and major, who have demonstrated outstanding leadership and skills with the potential to become future AMEDD leaders.

The AMEDD Iron Majors award began in 2009, and Radi is only the second National Guard Soldier selected to participate, in the history of the award.

"It's an honor to know I am representing the HIARNG as the only National Guard or Reserve Physician Assistants (PA) selected for this year's AMEDD Iron Majors Week," said Radi. "I am excited about this opportunity and look forward to gaining a greater understanding of the complex issues inherent to Army medicine and the Joint Health Services Enterprise."

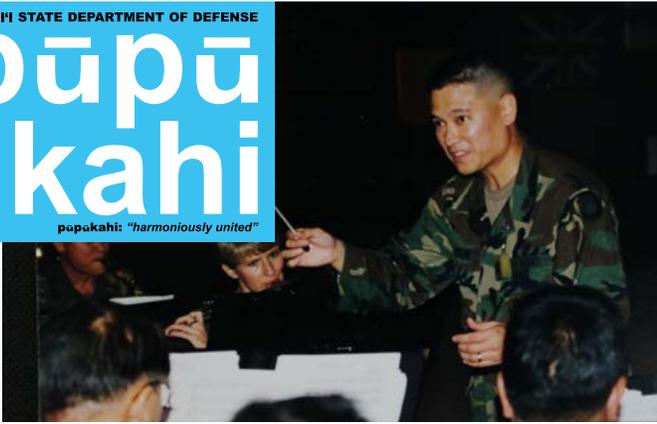
The Army Medical Specialist Corps (AMSC) allocates only one slot annually to the National Guard/ Army Reserve, which makes being selected for the award exceedingly difficult as Soldiers are competing against the best PAs, occupational therapists, dietitians, and speech pathologists in the Army reserve component for a single slot.

The five-day leader development course exposes the officers selected to a variety of inter-agency activities and discussions with experts from multiple fields, executives, and senior leaders. The course also helps to build the experience and knowledge base necessary to address future complex issues Army medicine and the Department of Defense are likely to encounter.

"Radi is among the most talented officers of any rank I have worked with in my military service," said Col. Walter Ross Jr., state surgeon for the HIARNG. "His character, intelligence,



Hilo, Hawai'i - Maj. Joshua Radi, a physician assistant in the Hawai'i Army National Guard, conducting quantitative fit testing on one of the Special Response Team (SRT) members during the joint chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) situational training exercise with the SRT in Hilo April 12, 2022.



Leader of the Bands

117th Army Public Affairs | Story by Sgt Lianne Hirano

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Curtis Hiyane, Commander of the 111th Army Band (111AB) has been selected as the new Vice Chief of Army National Guard (ARNG) Bands.

With almost 40 years of military service, Hiyane has been the 111AB's commander for over 25 years. He will also take responsibility at a national level to interface between all band commanders from 51 states and territories with the Army School of Music for planning, training and recruiting.

On top of commanding the 111AB in Hawaii, Hiyane will be traveling across the country to conduct Operational Readiness Evaluations (ORE) for all National Guard bands. He will also conduct Technical Assistance visits and organize and host the annual ARNG Band Leader Training.

Hiyane was very humbled by his promotion to chief warrant officer five.

"I know and truly believe that it has been paved by the love and support and family and colleagues," said Hiyane. "I feel I owe each and every one of them a pledge to do my best to represent the National Guard bands with honor and distinction."

He is grateful to share his passion for music through teaching high school band at Mililani high School and conducting the 111AB.

"My career at Mililani High School allowed me to shape minds and influence the future leaders through music," said Hiyane. "In the HIARNG 111AB, I work with professional musicians in every sense of the word. I really consider it an honor and privilege to be the conductor and commander of such an outstanding unit."

Hiyane recently retired from the State Department of Education as the Mililani High School band director with 30 years of service. His favorite subject to teach was the Symphonic Wind Ensemble.

"The students in that class all had the same drive and passion for band literature," said Hiyane. "It was truly a pleasure to guide them through their music educational journey."

Hiyane initially joined the military in 1982 as a combat medic specialist with the 100th Infantry Battalion for nine years. At the time, he was going to college to become a high school band teacher, so he transferred to the HIARNG and joined the 111AB.

He realized his affinity for teaching while coaching judo at Mililani High School. With a 4th degree black belt in judo, Hiyane said he really enjoyed instructing other people in this sport. His inspiration to teach music came from his intermediate band director at Wheeler Intermediate school, Don Tsuha.

"Mr. Tsuha had a way of teaching that went way beyond the notes and rhythm of the music," recalled Hiyane. "He expressed the importance of teaching music to develop the character of a caring human being."

Hiyane is the first Hawai'i guardsman to serve as the Vice Chief of the ARNG Bands, one of two chief warrant officers in the nation. He will perform double-duty as the Commander of the 111th Army Band as well as the ARNG bands.

He is thankful for the 111AB for the opportunity to serve as Vice Chief of the ARNG Bands. He said it was due to their performances during annual external evaluations and continuous prestigious merit that made a lasting impression which led to his military career opportunities.

"Although, this promotion is for one Soldier, I truly believe that it's a combination of all and the time and efforts that the 111AB members produce," said Hiyane. "I would like to have them continue to be the shining star of musical excellence in the National Guard. The allocation of a chief warrant officer five slot is a credit to the 111AB."



Leadership from the Hawai'i Air National Guard and 154th Wing join original members of the 154th Civil Engineer Squadron's Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight during an EOD Standup Ceremony May 31, 2022, at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. The EOD flight was previously designated as the 647th EOD flight from 1992 to 2022 and transitioned into a Hawai'i Air National Guard asset under the 154th Wing. The facility is named in honor of Senior Airman William N. Newman, who was the second, Hickam-based EOD Airman who was killed in action. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. John Linzmeier)

'13 years in the making,' Hawai'i ANG receives EOD mission

154th Wing Public Affairs - Hawai'i Air National Guard | Story by Staff Sgt. John Linzmeier | Thursday, June 2, 2022

The Air National Guard's newest Explosive Ordnance Disposal flight was activated at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam on May 31, as the unit transitioned from the Air Force's Active-Duty branch.

This changeover was observed by Hawai'i Air National Guard leaders and EOD professionals from around the nation during the 154th Civil Engineer Squadron EOD Flight stand-up ceremony, held in tribute of the unit's history and onward trajectory.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal specialists are known for providing life-saving capabilities in deployed environments by neutralizing explosive hazards, such as improvised explosive devices. But as a primary duty at JBPH-H, they offer a wider range of proficiencies in servicing and troubleshooting live-aircraft munitions.

Lt. Col. Nhut Dao, 154th CES commander, said that his squadron has been planning to secure an EOD mission set since the 154th Wing first received F-22 Raptor aircraft in 2010 to help broaden the overall effectiveness of the organization.

"This moment has been 13 years

in the making," said Dao, "We are here today to say, 'thank you' and recognize the perseverance and the foresight of all the hard work of so many people who were a part of this initiative. So many have retired and moved on to other jobs, but we are here at the receiving end because of their hard work and dedication."

While the unit has been redesignated as an ANG asset, it carries on JBPH-H's growing EOD history. The 154th EOD flight remains located in the same Senior Airman William N. Newman EOD Facility. The facility is named in honor of the second, Hickam based EOD Airman who was killed in action.

Master Sgt. Steven Dauck, the previous 647th EOD Flight chief, volunteered to oversee the transition of the flight to the Hawai'i ANG, which included his own career as a 'packaged deal.' Halfway through the ceremony, Dauck was called on before the audience to raise his right hand and reenlist as a guardsman, effectively reinstating him as the first 154th EOD Flight chief.

The enlistment was followed by a resounding applause and gave

space for Dauck to share his remarks, focused on the unit's operational history, which go back more than half a century.

Dauck's overview spanned from the 647th EOD flight's nearly 900 in-garrisons missions to the thousands of unexploded ordinances and improvised explosive devices that have been mitigated throughout the Pacific, the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

"I mention all of this today so that we may remember the past and those who gave their lives while assigned to this unit," said Dauck. "It is with great joy that even though the Active-Duty EOD mission's sun is setting here at Hickam, the legacy of the EOD flight will live on within the 154th and the Hawai'i Air National Guard and I'm very honored to be a part of it."

Following the final remarks, the audience was directed outside to witness the official unveiling of the new unit's signage. Dao, along with the three original members of the 154th EOD Flight gripped the white drape together and proudly revealed the new 154th Civil Engineering Squadron sign,

branded in memory of Senior Airman Newman.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Airmen are provided extensive training and called upon to perform tactically harrowing and technically demanding tasks in diverse environments. The Hawai'i ANG will be seeking skilled and motivated individuals as they continue to build up a highly capable team of EOD specialists.

"I am so thrilled about this new addition; that we are finally adding EOD to the 'Guard' and it's a perfect fit to our mission," said Brig. Gen. Duke M. Ota, Hawai'i Air National Guard Assistant Adjutant General - Air. "This is the culmination of a lot of hard work between [154th Wing operations,] Pacific Air Forces, and the National Guard Bureau. We definitely want to welcome this EOD mission and are looking forward to everything you guys are going to accomplish."



Keeping Our Hawaii Retired Guardsmen

Informed - *State of Hawaii, Department of Defense, Public Affairs Office | Story by Bernhard Lashleyeidner*

With nearly a half a century of selfless service to the National Guard and the state of Hawai'i, a dedicated retiree finally prepares to lay down his pack. Again.

Galen Yoshimoto's government career and life of service began 53 years ago in Oct. 1968 when he enlisted into the Hawai'i Air National Guard (HIANG) as an Aircraft Electrician at Hickam Air Force Base, he retired from the HIANG in 2005, and now ending as a newsletter editor supporting the community that he devoted his life to.

Yoshimoto was born and raised in Kalihi, Hawai'i. He graduated from Governor Wallace Rider Farrington High School in 1967, and enrolled at the University of Hawai'i. During the Vietnam war, men could qualify for 1-S or 2-S deferments if they were full-time college students and making satisfactory grades. They could continue attending college and be deferred from military service until they were too old to be drafted. For Yoshimoto, however, college would not turn out to be the start of his career.

"I wasn't doing well in my classes at UH, so they dropped me," said Yoshimoto. "The University informed the draft board; I was no longer eligible for deferment and could be drafted."

For Yoshimoto, his military service began when he voluntarily enlisted into the Hawai'i Air National Guard.

"I knew by joining the HIANG, there would be a slim chance I

would get deployed to Vietnam," said Yoshimoto. And that was a risk I was willing to take.

While serving as a traditional guardsman, he was still eager

to learn and attended Honolulu Community College, where he received his Associate of Science in drafting. Two years later he re-enrolled in UH and earned his Bachelor of Science degree in industrial arts education. After completing his degree, he requested to be a part of the Air Force Reserves Officer Training Course.

"In 1977 I received my commission to 2nd Lt.," said Yoshimoto. "I was assigned to the 201st Air Operations Group as an Executive Officer."

Over the course of his career, Yoshimoto held numerous accomplished positions within the HIANG, the last two of which were Director of the 154th Wing, and Commander of the 154th Mission Support flight.

In May 2005, Yoshimoto retired from the HIANG as a lieutenant colonel with more than 36 years of honorable service. Following his



retirement, he began working for the State of Hawaii, Department of Defense as a civilian.

"Six months after I retired from the HING, I started the Retiree News (RN) newsletter," said Yoshimoto. "I created the newsletter to share information with HIANG and Hawai'i Army National Guard (HIARNG) retirees, veterans and community members."

The newsletter was positively received within the HING retiree community and his new full-time was just getting started.

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Retiree News

Sharing information with Hawaii National Guard retirees, members and friends



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Check Six – 2010: Friends at a Retirement Ceremony

Veterans

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Retiree News photograph

Retirement ceremonies are an important part of a person's military career. Many times retirees join currently serving members to honor the newest retiree.

William Petti's ceremony was June 25, 2010 at the 154th Wing's dining facility.



"I have worked a variety of positions for the State of Hawai'i: as a military executive officer for the office of the Adjutant General; public information officer (PIO) for Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HIEMA); as well as serving as the department's legislative liaison and the state representative for O'ahu's North Shore neighborhood board."

Yoshimoto continued working for the Hawai'i DoD as a civilian employee for an additional 12 years before deciding to retire again.

"I'm a person that enjoys working behind the scenes," said Yoshimoto. "Being able to provide people with the information to make their lives better is all the recognition I need."

As a former PIO for HIEMA, he understands the value of having and sharing accurate information with others.

"I've listened to many HIANG veterans sharing stories about the Wing starting at the same time the HING started, and they had it all wrong," said Yoshimoto. "From November 4, 1946, to November 30, 1960, the unit was the 199th Fighter Squadron; a carryover from WWII."

Yoshimoto continued correcting the record. On Dec .1, 1960, the 199th was authorized to expand to a group level, and the 154th Fighter-Interceptor Group was established first by the National Guard Bureau, and then later the Wing. His pursuit of distributing information would assist him as he continued his next endeavor.

When he started the newsletter Yoshimoto was using Hawaiian Telnet as his service provider. The service plan offered limited email capabilities, which created problems as the newsletter grew. With this high number of email addresses, the system began labeling them as spam and in some cases blocking them from being sent out.

"Retiree News temporarily ceased operation after publishing more than 127 editions over six years," said Yoshimoto. "At that point, there were over 1,600 readers on the email distribution list."

Yoshimoto said he took a two-year break from publishing the monthly newsletter. During the break, he had numerous HING veterans asking about the newsletter, as well as a chance encounter with the HIARNG Command Sergeant Major, who asked him to restart the newsletter.

"The newsletter was very labor intensive," said Yoshimoto. "I began researching different platforms for the site and thought Facebook would be the best place."

He reached out to several HING retirees to ask them their thoughts about the newsletter being posted on Facebook and many said it was a place for young people and not the best platform. At that point, he decided the best thing to do was to make RN a separate entity and pay to secure the name and a web hosting provider.

"I didn't have any experience making websites," said Yoshimoto. "I watched three YouTube videos

about how to create a webpage using WordPress software. I setup the website that afternoon and made the first post the next day."

The web-based version of RN, <http://retireenews.org>, started on January 22, 2013. The site came from a modest beginning but has evolved over the years to feature more content.

RN's most commented post was on the myths and facts about shingles.

Yoshimoto said his favorite RN post was on Father's Day 2017, due to the amazing free graphics he was able to locate on the web, which retirees and veteran loved.

"I wanted to provide useful information to my fellow HING retirees," said Yoshimoto. "I didn't want to make this a blog for people to leave comments, which doesn't add value."

RN use to report guard members passing in their obituary section as well as key spouses who were active in the family care group.

"I received an email from a retiree, upset because we didn't report the passing of service member's grandson," said Yoshimoto. "I informed the retiree that RN reports only former HING service members and key spouses in the HING family readiness group."

Yoshimoto's original vision was to operate the site for two to three years. Eight years later, RN has published more than 10,000 posts and received 1.65 million views. RN continues to provide beneficial information to current,

former and retired HING service-members on and off-island, as well as an opportunity to stay connected with each other.

"The website has been a blessing," said retired Senior Master Sgt. John Chun, HIANG. "I enjoy looking at the old pictures on the site; they bring back so many memories."

Chun said things that make the RN website so special is they post a lot of National Guard information and obituaries of HING service-members that have passed away.

"I've been following Retiree News from the very beginning," said Chun. "I hope someone steps up and continues operating the website the way Galen has."

Yoshimoto said it saddens him to have to stop maintaining the website.

"Maintaining the site has been a labor of love," said Yoshimoto. "I take care of all the financial aspects of managing the page and creating content for the page."

Yoshimoto said Retiree News will cease operation in July, but the page will remain up for viewing through the end of the year. No new content will be added unless someone is willing to step in and maintain Yoshimoto's original vision: sharing the lives and stories of the men and women who served in the Hawai'i National Guard.



KC-135R Stratotanker, serial number 60-0329, arrived at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force on April 30, 2022 to become a part of the museum's permanent collection at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. The jet was delivered from the 154th Hawai'i Air National Guard Wing. In 1967, the crew of this tanker was awarded the McKay Trophy for the most meritorious flight of the year after it refueled six U.S. Navy aircraft that were dangerously low on fuel. The flight included a brief tri-level refueling two of the Navy aircraft and additional refueling of two Air Force fighters. The Stratotanker will be on display in the museum's Air Park in July. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Ty Greenlees)

First Stratotanker inducted into National Museum of USAF

154th Wing Public Affairs - Hawai'i Air National Guard | Story by Staff Sgt. John Linzmeier | Saturday, April 30, 2022

Aircrew members were at the brink of tears as they soared over Wright-Patterson Air Force Base on April 30, knowing that their most cherished aircraft would be the first KC-135 Stratotanker to be inducted into the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force.

Down below, aviation enthusiasts from around the nation could be seen gathered along the museum's sparsely used runway. The enthralled audience, many of which have personal or family ties to the KC-135, have been waiting for this moment to cheer on the arrival of the Hawai'i Air National Guard's most historic aircraft and interact with tanker crews from the past and present.

The Stratotanker, numbered 60-0329, has been an integral part of the 203rd Air Refueling Squadron since forming in 1993, but the Stratotanker also earned a more global reputation while under the care of its previous stewards during the Vietnam Era. It's recognized as the first refueling platform to be awarded the McKay Trophy in 1967, an honor reserved for aviators who demonstrate the highest skill levels by performing the 'most meritorious flight of the year.'

The 203rd ARS pilots at the helm descended for a crowd-pleasing low-level approach before looping around for a conclusive landing. Wheels contacted the ground, and the KC-135R slowly came to a halt; 0329's career was finally over. With more than six decades of operational service, the jet took merely a moment to become a national artifact in the museum.

Lt. Col. Kelly Church, 203rd ARS commander, found himself at a loss for words as he killed engines from the aircraft's left driver seat. After a deep inhale, he uttered the final words to be spoken through its communication system, '0329, thank you for your service.' Church later said the moment was overwhelming for him and his team, as they could not refrain from reflecting on the countless lives and operations which the aircraft had impacted throughout its time in service.

In support of 0329's final voyage, the crew was accompanied by senior leadership to recognize and celebrate the occasion's significance.

Deputy Director, Air National Guard, Maj. Gen. Duke A. Pirak, manned cockpit jump seat, and the 154th Wing command team joined the mission-essential maintenance crew members within the cabin.

While 0329's last crew shared an intimate connection with their prized 'tanker,' they were greeted by an entourage of veterans and family members whose livelihoods were also once deeply intertwined with the historic aircraft.

But most notable of all in attendance were the three guests of honor – all original crew members who took home the McKay Trophy more than 50 years ago. Retired pilots, Lt. Col. Richard Trail, Lt. Col. John Casteel, and retired crew chief, Senior Master Sgt. Jack Barnes, are considered living legends within the Air Force's tanker community for executing the world's first tri-level refueling procedure, believed to have saved the lives of several U.S. Navy pilots.

While conducting wartime refueling operations in the Gulf of Tonkin in May 1967, the crew responded to an emergency refueling request from six Navy planes; two A-3 Skywarriors, two F-8 Crusaders, and two F-4 Phantoms.

As they refueled one of the A-3s, one of the F-8s ran critically low on fuel. The KC-135 guided the F-8 to the A-3's refueling boom and daisy-chained a refueling process from the KC-135 to the A-3 to the F-8. The bold actions of the Stratotanker crew on that day ensured that all aircraft were able to return to their aircraft carrier safely.

"Being able to spend time with the McKay Trophy crew and seeing them being reunited with their aircraft was truly something special," said Church. "One of the original crew chefs who worked on the jet in Thailand, said it looked better than it did in 1968."

Throughout the remainder of the gathering, Senior Master Sgt. Paul Foster, 154th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief who was the last crew member to disembark the aircraft in an operational capacity, spent the majority of his time alongside Barnes, discussing memories of the jet. Of all the 'nooks and crannies' the two revisited, the two crew chiefs discovered

that they would both store king crab and lobster in the same underbelly compartment, where the altitude kept food cold during their excursions.

"All these little things, especially the technical ones, you never forget," said Barnes. "Even though it's been so long since I've worked on it, I'm feeling confident that I can go through the steps of pre-fighting it right now. It means a lot to me to see that it's been in great hands all these years. It's looking just as slick as ever."

Apart from 0329's outer paint scheme, the majority of the KC-135's components have remained largely unchanged for the past 60 years. The aircraft was branded with a specific star decal on its tail flash after transferring to the Hawai'i ANG in 1993. The 'Hoku,' meaning star in the Hawaiian language, represents the stars that Polynesians would use as reference points to navigate through the Pacific Ocean. Tanker 0329 was also given the nickname, Kapea, one of the many titles attributed to the Southern Cross constellation.

The National Museum of the USAF will preserve the aircraft in its present form. In honor of the aircraft's heritage, a legacy decal reading 'Young Tiger Task Force' was permanently attached to the nose, signifying its original unit and the air refueling forerunners who answered their call aboard Tanker 0329.

Stratankers today continue to remain the U.S. Air Force's most widely used air refueling platform. While the museum's halls have been featured with some of the world's most dominant airframes, nearly modern displays have relied on tanker gas to make an impact on the global stage. And with the induction of 0329, the tanker community is finally represented.

"Nowadays, global reach means everything in the Air Force," said Brig. Gen. Dann S. Carlson, 154th Wing commander, during the induction ceremony. "And I cannot think of a more powerful example to showcase what global reach really is other than 0329. It is truly my honor and privilege to share this gift of Aloha with our country, and I hope that it inspires a strong and resilient force for generations to come."



Hawai'i Air National Guard Key Ohana Spouse, Lucy M. Morris, is named the Air National Guard's recipient of the 2021 Joan Orr Spouse Award May 14, 2022, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. Lucy is the spouse of Maj. Morris, 199th Fighter Squadron. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mysti Bicoy)

Devoted Hawai'i ANG spouse takes home Joan Orr Award

154th Wing Public Affairs - Hawai'i Air National Guard | Story by Master Sgt. Mysti Bicoy | Saturday, May 14, 2022

Affectionate smiles and excited greetings follow Lucy Morris as she walks through the halls of the fighter squadron. Her endearing replies and the sincere conversations with Airmen encompass the true meaning of genuine support for squadron members and their families in her role as a 'key ohana spouse.'

For several years Morris, spouse of Maj. Morris, 199th Fighter Squadron, has devoted time and energy as a key spouse to members and families in the squadron. But as the pandemic hit, she realized that the extra time spent went a long way. Her gracious attitude and selfless efforts did not go unnoticed, as her local efforts were recognized at the national level as she became the recipient of the Air National Guard's 2021 Joan Orr Spouse of the Year.

The Joan Orr Spouse of the Year Award honors significant contributions made by non-military spouses of Air Force members.

"It gives me such joy when people know they can trust me with what

are sometimes very important issues to their ohana," said Morris, a native of Australia who moved to Hawai'i in 2013. "I felt this was a good way to give back to the Hawaiian Raptors who had supported me so well when I was a new military spouse."

Upon moving to Hawaii, she embraced a journey in a new country and a new culture, leading to the need to turn to others for assistance.

"I didn't know anything about the military or Hawaii," said Morris. "I was blessed to be encompassed by the military community and spouse network who scooped me up and taught me everything I know; they became my support and friends."

Since then, she's distinguished herself as a Key Spouse by volunteering with the 19th and 199th Fighter Squadrons as part of a Total Force Integration team known as the 'Hawaiian Raptors' in the local community.

Last year alone, she volunteered more than 280 hours to the

squadron's programs and community projects. Amongst her many contributions, she played a vital role in spearheading the Parent Relief Mission Support program that provided a friendly face and a safe space for childcare for parents struggling to find care during the pandemic. Her timely efforts, along with the Hawaiian Raptor spouse team, established a geographically organized-emergency housing plan that provides a haven for 47 Total Force Integration families in a natural or civil disaster. As an essential contributor to the family hardship program, she cooks and delivers meals and distributes vital supplies to families undergoing unexpected life difficulties.

After all she does for the squadron, Morris still manages to find time to volunteer outside of the unit. She's passionate about connecting her spouse network with Hawaiian cultural programs such as those offered by the Kualoa Ranch and the Mānoa Heritage Center. She also dedicates time to the Hawai'i Food Bank, helping to distribute food and supplies to hundreds of

Hawai'i families.

"I have always enjoyed volunteering and being a social connector," Morris said. "My goal is to encourage more units around the country to instill a strong Key Spouse program, I really hope this program will continue to grow stronger."

Nominees for the award are evaluated in several categories, including participation in base and community activities, self-improvement efforts, voluntary service in Air Force-related organizations and activities, contributions to the state or to the nation, and contributions to the resolution of contemporary social problems.

"I could not be more proud and pleased with Lucy's efforts alongside the Key Ohana Team," said Col. Kevin Horton, 199th Fighter Squadron commander. "Her significant support with the 'Hawaiian Raptors' and her selfless contributions in the community is a true testament to the value she brings to not just our Airmen, but to all the lives she's impacted."



YCA Hilo's Plan Bee

Youth Challenge Academy Hilo - Story by Joshua Anthony M.S.W

One of the core tenets of the Youth Challenge Academy program is to instill cadets with a sense of responsibility to their community. On the YCA Hilo campus, the kuleana (responsibility) for one's 'ohana (family) and the 'āina (land) is being taught by a group of very small leaders: bees.

YCA-H's Apiary Studies program was one of the few good things to come out of the COVID-19 pandemic when students had to remain on campus during their residency and lost most of their interaction with outside organizations. Fortunately for the cadets, a small bee colony already existed on the Keaukaha Military Reserve (KMR) in Hilo, where their educational exploration into apiary studies would begin. Funding for the program was granted by the Youth Challenge Academy Foundation to pair cadets and instructors with KMR's Facility Administrator, Maj. Phil J. Scholten and local beekeepers who helped the YCA-H team set up and maintain their own colonies, now at ten hives strong.

Joshua Anthony, a Career Explorations Counselor with YCA-H, explains that bees do much more than just produce honey and give the occasional sting. These winged soldiers are a crucial element of our worldwide food and ecosystems and working with them is a starting point for teaching cadets skills that will eventually translate into career paths.

"The cadets from Class 21 and 22 helped to build some of the hives, learning hands-on carpentry and math skills," Anthony says. "After the hives were constructed, cadets were responsible for painting them, which is another real-world skill for anyone in the construction or home renovation fields."

Honeybee colony collapses have become a more frequent problem around the world, so maintaining a healthy hive that is free of pests and threats is a key component to the program's success. Cadets and staff inspect the hives on a regular basis, making sure invasive mites and beetles are removed. This interaction benefits not only the bees, but the cadets as well.

"We're not a therapeutic program, but we have seen a lot of benefits for those interacting with the bees, with as many as 50,000 living in one hive," Anthony says. "Counselors have observed cadets struggling with PTSD, ADHD, and anxiety finding themselves gaining a sense of purpose and accomplishment when working in the apiary."

The Apiary Studies program also aligns with YCA-H's commitment to helping Native, Indigenous, and Pacific Islander cadets reconnect with the land and its natural inhabitants. Between beekeeping and learning how to preserve and manage small portions of land, cadets will be well-situated for agricultural careers once finishing the program.

"This helps them to understand not only who they are, but also the importance of food sustainability, a healthy diet, and healthy resource management," said Anthony.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is another core tenant of the YCA program, and YCA-H seeks to do that by teaching the cadets how to reduce the amount of refined sugar that they consume, by using natural substitutes like honey. Honey has also long been recognized for some of its medicinal properties.

Cadets maintaining the apiary are given jars of fresh honey as a reward for their hard work. The rest makes its way into the local community as a vehicle for raising money used to teach cadets financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills, and how to market their products. The funds are used to purchase project supplies, and any leftover honey is gifted to community partners.

"Our hope for the future is to continue to produce completely organic, hand-harvested, locally sourced honey for our community," Anthony says. "We also hope to grow our hive count and 'pay it forward' by building more hives for other interested organizations, and for those serving our local population's food sustainability needs. It really is Hawai'i in a jar."





HI-EMA, UH Mānoa Students Team Up to Create "Wiki Hale" Shelter Prototype; Model Could Become a New Tool For Disaster Recovery | *Courtesy Story | Saturday, June 06, 2022*

Hawai'i faces a two-fold problem when it comes to natural disasters: The state is subject to hazards that can force many people from their homes, but its remote location and fragile supply chain make it much harder to ship in supplies to provide temporary shelter when a hurricane or tsunami strikes. So the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA) and the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa forged a novel partnership to design a prototype of a temporary shelter that's quick and simple to build, uses inexpensive standardized parts, and is easy and compact to store until needed.

The prototype, dubbed the "Wiki Hale" by the UH School of Architecture students who created it, could eventually be assembled in linked clusters to form communities with shared kitchen spaces and to house residents for weeks or months during recovery from a major disaster.

"Hawai'i has been fortunate over the past few decades and avoided the very destructive major events with widespread damage that we're most concerned about as emergency managers," said David Lopez, HI-EMA's Executive Officer. "An event like that could create a huge need for shelter, but it also could make it much harder to rely on outside resources to provide that shelter. The partnership with UH gave us an opportunity to explore a uniquely Hawai'i solution to the specific challenges we face here."

On the mainland, temporary housing after a disaster is sometimes provided using mobile homes trucked into the damaged area. That's not a viable option in mid-Pacific. In addition, the Port of Honolulu and the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport — the two primary points where goods enter the state — are vulnerable to damage from catastrophic events affecting the south O'ahu shore, which could complicate efforts to deliver recovery supplies to Hawai'i.

A Local Design For a Local Need: The Wiki Hale

"The Wiki Hale is a post-disaster temporary housing unit prototype design," said Amber Ternus, the project lead for the State. Ternus, a specialist with the HI-EMA resilience branch, works on projects designed to bolster the State's ability to recover from disaster. The project began with a cold call to UH Mānoa Assistant Professor Bundit Kanisthakon, who was keen to take on the project, Ternus said. He quickly restructured his entire ARCH 201 class to focus on creating the unit.

The prototype unit was designed and built by the students with Hawai'i's tropical climate in mind. "We centered all the design decisions around living in a tropical environment, living somewhere that has a high amount of sun, humidity and rain," Ternus said. Just as importantly, Ternus said, the entire prototype unit would only cost about \$2,000. "We were very much wanting to design something that would be available and practical for people to use when there are very limited resources," she said.

Though the prototype is the only one of its kind, the team behind Wiki Hale have made the plans open-source so that anyone could collect the materials and build their own. The UH team also plans to continue to refine the existing unit and design to create more options and configurability. Kanisthakon said he hopes the prototype will act as a seed for other designs that are uniquely suited for the tropics and incorporate the outdoors environment in architectural decisions. For Ternus, the project showcases the power of partnering to bring diverse perspectives to the table to address potential problems before a disaster occurs.

With hurricane season beginning, seeing things through that lens of preparedness is more important than ever, she said. No state or federal funding was devoted to the Wiki Hale project beyond the standard personnel costs for the state employees who spent time supporting the effort.

Continued - Space

from this point to IOC. NGB will facilitate and guide the action items to completion but the unit has the burden of insuring everything is completed to reach IOC.

The unit has been identified as one of the units that could be transferred to the Space National Guard, if it is established.

"The SATAF program will get this unit from here, with just a few members in a crawl phase, to a brisk walk over the next 18 months," concluded Mr. Novak. "This is an exciting time for the Hawai'i Air National Guard."

There has been a team of Airmen attached to HIANG HQ who have been laying the groundwork for the stand-up of the 293rd EWS over the past year.

"This (SATAF) is the first step in becoming a real unit," said Lt. Col. Chad Briggs, 293rd EWS commander. "In some ways units going through the conversion process have it easy. An activation SATAF requires us to lay the foundational programs that an already functioning squadron would have in place. All the items in the commander's inspection list need to be created."

The next hurdle the 293rd EWS faces is the IG inspection for federal recognition. Two of the actions items highlighted in the SATAF discussions were the basing memorandum and Organizational Change Request (OCR) but the federal recognition request will close out the SATAF items along with IOC.

"The discussion groups are identifying the key tasks to get the unit going, to be ready to deploy, and do our mission," stated Briggs. "My vision for the unit is Hawaiian concept 'Kulia I Ka Nu'u' (reach for the summit) which is a way of life. We always strive to do a little better each time. The military is constantly striving to improve as we are in competition with our adversaries. We have friendly competition with our partner units and service counterparts. There is 'good enough'. There is 'we can win' but let's try and be better. Let's do something better every single day. Make your personal life better, your community better, and your workplace better."

The members of the task force spent three long days in and out of meetings, in calls to NGB and the with PMRF organizations to thoroughly uncover everything that needs to be built from procedures and institutions to structures and facility improvements. The process closed out with a brief to the Assistant Adjutant General (Air) Hawai'i National Guard, Brig. Gen. Duke Ota and Hawai'i Air National Guard Senior Enlisted Leader, Chief Master Sgt. Zandra Fox, where the action items were presented.

"Everyone here has done a great job," said Briggs. "They have dug through the regulations. We have gotten some things wrong. We have learned and improved. They have been willing to be wrong, take the correction and move forward. I have been really impressed on their willingness to go through this process. We drive to keep going and move the process forward."



U.S. Air Force loadmasters from the 204th Airlift Squadron, Tech. Sgt. Josh Moracco and Senior Airman Sandra Kim, and Royal Australian Air Force loadmasters from 87 Squadron, Sgt. Ben Russell and Flt Sgt. Jay Johnson, gather May 12, 2022, at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. Aircrew members from each nation shared responsibilities on one another's aircraft throughout training exercise Global Dexterity. The multinational training environment was permitted through an international proclamation known as the 'Interfly Agreement,' enabling bilateral crew members to operate together in the same aircraft. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. John Linzmeier)

Australian, U.S. aircrew swap seats for exercise Global Dexterity

154th Wing Public Affairs - Hawai'i Air National Guard | Story by Staff Sgt. John Linzmeier | Thursday, May 19, 2022

Australian accents could be heard aboard U.S. aircraft, and vice versa, as international aviators participated in exercise Global Dexterity held here May 2-13.

C-17 Globemaster III crew members from the Royal Australian and U.S. Air Forces shared aircraft as they carried out a series of airdrop and airlift procedures, validating the effectiveness of bilateral aircrews from partnered nations.

The multinational training environment was permitted through an international proclamation known as the 'Inter-fly Agreement.' The proclamation was established during the Aerospace Medical Association

Conference in 2012 and is intended to promote and support cooperation and interoperability between nations.

"It's been a great proof-of-concept," said Royal Australian Air Force Flying Officer Daniel White, 36 Squadron pilot. "The training we all go through is so similar that you can jump in another country's C-17 and operate it the exact same way. The checklists and everything are the exact same, and it's just been an incredible experience."

Local airlift operations usually are carried out in a total-force environment, entailing members of the Hawai'i Air National Guard's 204th Airlift Squadron flying the same aircraft as their active-duty partners from the 535th AS. But the training activities of Global Dexterity pushed the longstanding associates to extend their mutual trust, and strong working relationship with their Australian partners as the participants executed complex flying sorties throughout the Hawaiian Islands.

Maj. Jeremy Smith, 535th AS standards and evaluations chief, said that interoperability between RAAF and USAF members began well before each takeoff. Maintenance teams from both nations serviced one another's aircraft and bilateral intelligence specialists worked together to develop robust tactical scenarios for crews to use throughout the exercise.

Aircrew members also utilized the Hawai'i ANG's 169th Air Defense Squadron to run real-time scenario scripts, creating layers of complexity and dynamic-threat reactions while flying through the island chain.

"The first iteration of Global Dexterity [in 2019] was all about getting administrative aspects

squared away so that we can test out the Interfly Program," said Tech. Sgt. Josh Moracco, 204th AS loadmaster and ground operations area planner. "But this time around, we ramped things up quite a bit and we are, no kidding, practicing exactly how we play."

Within the two weeks of training, exercise participants were able to execute some of the C-17's major competencies, such as low-level formations, airdrops, static line jumps with U.S. Army Soldiers, night flying, tactical landings and rapid delivery of fully loaded aircraft.

Some of the cargo movements to Hilo on the island of Hawai'i made a direct impact on the U.S. Army training initiative. One payload, consisting of approximately 35 tons of vehicles, equipment and passengers, enabled Soldiers to prepare for an air missile exercise called Tenacious Archer.

Each training mission consisted of an unfamiliar mixture of crew members allocated throughout three airframes - two U.S. aircraft and a third belonging to the RAAF. Some flights entailed U.S. and Australian pilots flying side-by-side in the same cockpit. Other flights entailed one country's air force covering the

loadmaster positions in the rear while their bilateral partners flew in the front.

"This is all about building camaraderie and building partnerships," said Moracco, "which is a huge deal in our organization. Getting to know people, names, faces; it all makes a huge difference when operating together and accomplishing a common goal."

Mission planners are in the works of continuing their bilateral training curriculum in Australia, having the RAAF hosting U.S. aircrew.

"This just proves that if you need bodies, if you need 'iron,' our friends can come out and support us, or we can help fill in for them, and it would be completely seamless," said Morroco. "We're all out here sharing the same Pacific Ocean, so no matter where we go, East or West, we can easily join up. And at this rate, I can see the two nations answering the call together when their teamwork is needed."



Capt. Elijah Lincoln, Hawai'i National Guard Joint Staff Cyber Mission Assurance Team commander, observes as his Airmen receive achievement medals May 14, 2022, at Fort DeRussy, Hawaii. Lincoln and his team were recognized by U.S. Army and Air Force leadership for enhancing the Hawai'i National Guard's cyber-response capabilities during a National Guard Bureau pilot program, held from October 2018 through March 2020. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. John Linzmeier)

Cyber team awarded for aiding community's critical networks

154th Wing Public Affairs - Hawai'i Air National Guard | Story by Staff Sgt. John Linzmeier | Thursday, June 16, 2022

Three Airmen were presented with Achievement Medals on May 14, at Fort DeRussy for providing major enhancements to Hawai'i National Guard's cyber-response capabilities.

The small team of cyber analysts and operators was handpicked to start one of the nation's first Cyber Mission Assurance Teams. This specialized mission assurance force supports critical infrastructure networks within the community.

Hawai'i was one of three states to take on the national initiative through a National Guard Bureau pilot program, held from October 2018 through March 2020, including participation from Washington and Ohio National Guard.

"The Hawai'i National Guard has been well known to be able to respond to any national disaster that comes our way," said U.S. Air Force Capt. Elijah Lincoln, Cyber Mission Assurance Team commander. "We do it for the Big Island lava flows, we do it for the hurricanes and we do it for COVID. But on the cyber side, that's where we needed to ask ourselves, 'what do we need to do if someone were to come out of nowhere and shut down critical infrastructure?' You need to have a response, and that's why we built that response team over those years."

The 10 person CMAT, made up of HIANG Airmen from the 298th Support Squadron and 201st Combat Operations Squadron, and Soldiers from the Hawai'i Army National Guard, volunteered to participate in this joint initiative under operational control of the Hawai'i National Guard's Joint Staff. The multi-service environment served as

a collaborative hub where members could bring forward their unique cyber skillsets and determine new ways to merge their capabilities with other government and civil networks.

On the surface, the CMAT workspace looks reminiscent of a group of hackers in a Hollywood flick. But ironically, their main objective is to simply deny hackers from any opportunity to cause digital harm. Technicians can be seen sipping on caffeinated drinks, scrolling through computer screens spattered with digital traffic, and occasionally exclaiming the cliché, yet satisfying catchphrase, 'I got em.'

While networking systems have become widely used in the digital age, everyday service entities such as schools, hospitals, police departments and private services are exposed to new forms of cyber threats. The possibility of an unexpected network breach can lead to a shutdown of operations or exploit sensitive data.

As a preventative force, Lincoln's team spent their tenure in the CMAT surveying local network systems and becoming familiar with key personnel, policies, and equipment of external agencies. His team members, Staff Sgt. Marc Masuno and Staff Sgt. Isaac McMillan, were among the first guardsmen to develop standard operating procedures that members could immediately use as a reference and apply the necessary skills to prevent or alleviate cyber-attacks.

"When this all started out, we were fortunate enough to have a baseline of expertise between the Air and Army staff," said Brig. Gen. Moses Kaoiwi Jr., Hawai'i Army National Guard commander. "But at the same time, we had

limited knowledge of exactly what we can and cannot do, and how we can most effectively communicate with other agencies. This was a lot to ask for from Capt. Lincoln and his team, but they did a remarkable job at navigating through this uncharted territory and laid down the foundation we needed to help protect our critical infrastructures."

The CMAT team made groundbreaking progress in laying down networking capabilities with external agencies, starting with the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency and later on providing survey services for the Department of Transportation, including local airports and harbors.

Some of the skills and practices they developed are distributed to the Hawai'i National Guard's international allies through the State Partnership Program. During an exchange with the Indonesian Armed Forces in Jakarta, the joint staff demonstrated some of the CMAT's network security advancements to enhance bilateral capabilities.

While the national CMAT pilot program officially wrapped up in 2020, Kaoiwi said the program's developments are far too valuable to let go. Since then, Airmen and Soldiers have been participating in organic cyber training exercises to help maintain their networking competencies and continue to grow their skills alongside partners, including a cyber training activity that is slated to be held alongside the Arizona, California and Nevada National Guards later this month.

Kauai Veterans Cemetery Blessing Ceremony



The Kauai Mayor, Derek S.K. Kawakami, Adjutant General State of Hawaii, Maj. Gen. Kenneth Hara, Deputy Adjutant General State of Hawaii, Brig. Gen. Stephan Logan, State of Hawaii's Senior Enlisted Leader, Command Sgt. Maj. Dana Wingad, and Veterans attended the Kauai Veterans Cemetery Expansion Blessing Ceremony hosted by Mayor Derek Kawakami together with the Department of Parks & Recreation and State Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS), April 21, 2022, Kauai Veterans Cemetery. The assembly gathered to celebrate and bless the completion of the Kauai Veterans Cemetery, New Access Road, Expansion & Improvements project (~\$3.9M construction costs)





The Hawai'i National Guard's Task Force Medical commander, Col. Mark Young, meets with Maui Mayor Michael P. Victorino to discuss COVID-19 mitigating strategies and medical support for the County of Maui, islands of Kaho'olawe, Lanai Maui and Molokai.



Hawai'i Army National Guard Col. Mark Young served as the HING Task Force Medical spokesperson for numerous news stories and public announcement during the TF's activation, as shown in this screen shot of a broadcast by KGMB, the CBS affiliate station in Oahu, Hawaii.

Ho'okahi Imua – moving forward together, enabling the mission of a citizen Soldier

IMCOM-Pacific | Story by R. Slade Walters | Thursday, May 5, 2022

For almost two years, National Guard Soldiers and Airmen from all across the United States supported COVID-19 response efforts, and the Hawai'i National Guard was no exception.

The HING tapped Citizen Soldier Col. Mark Young to lead Joint Task Force Medical when it stood up on April 14, 2020.

In addition to serving in the HING, Young serves as a U.S. Army civilian operations and plans specialist at Installation Management Command-Pacific working in the G3/5/7 (Operations/Plans/Training) directorate.

When Young got the call to mobilize, nobody knew how long he would be required to be away from his civilian job at IMCOM-Pacific, but the G3/5/7 director, Don Bradshaw, knew it was an important mission and fully supported Young's mobilization.

"It is difficult for us to perform our mission if we don't have the support of our families and the support of our civilian employers," said Young.

"As a former reservist myself, I understand the obligations of the military member, and also of their employer. We knew this was an important mission," said Bradshaw.

Because of the uncertainty of COVID-19, the task force had to be built on-the-fly and it was necessary to be flexible with Young's deployment orders.

"We had to build this plane in the air," said Young.

"You know, normally when soldiers go on deployments, they've got 270 day orders. It's a blanket order to do a certain mission. This one was unique in that Mark's orders were generally 90 days, 120 days, and they were extended over time," said Bradshaw.

Throughout Young's mobilization, the IMCOM-Pacific G3/5/7 found ways to continue its mission supporting U.S. Army Garrisons that serve nearly 300,000 military-affiliated personnel at approximately 125 installation sites located in four countries and spanning roughly 20 million square miles across the Indo-Pacific region, from Alaska to the Republic of the Marshall Islands and from Hawai'i to East Asia.

"We knew we were going to have a gap, and so, we tasked organized. We looked at the various functions that Mark did – requirements that didn't stop because of COVID – and we picked up the slack. As things evolved, it became very evident that he was the right guy for the job, and while unpredictability was an issue, he kept up steady communication with us the whole time, so we were never out of touch," Bradshaw said.

In some cases, team members filling in for Young had to learn while doing.

"Our challenge was to pick out the things that he did and then reassign them to some other team member. Some of those tasks were things that folks had done before or had a little bit of background in, in other cases, there was a bit of a learning curve, but we

overcame," said Bradshaw.

IMCOM-Pacific's willingness to support Young's mobilization helped enable the TF Medical mission, which assisted citizens of Hawai'i through some of the toughest parts of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

"There's a cost, but you feel like it was worth it considering what his contribution is to the state," said Bradshaw.

The Hawai'i National Guard's COVID-19 assistance to federal, state, and local authorities was the longest state activation in its history. The TF Medical motto was "Ho'okahi Imua," which means "moving forward together" in the Hawaiian language.

"Coming together and moving forward ... that's exactly what the task force did," said Young.

During activation, working with the Hawai'i Department of Health and other community partners, TF Medical took on a myriad of tasks and helped thousands of citizens of Hawai'i by performing medical screenings, conducting public health education encounters in low-income housing areas, and collecting thousands of nasopharyngeal swab specimens at correctional facilities, long-term care facilities, private residences and businesses.

"They might not remember the vaccinations and testing, or the education, everything that we've done for them, but they will remember how they were treated ... the team treated everyone with the highest level

of professionalism, dignity and respect ... those are things that I'm really proud of," said Young.

In addition to in-person medical services, TF Medical assisted the state by providing many other supports, like pre-packaging \$10 million worth of equipment and 300,000 pieces of Personal Protective Equipment for emergency kits, repairing lifesaving biomedical equipment, and developing a COVID-19 training course that taught participants how to break the infection cycle, signs and symptoms, mitigating practices and strategies for the workplace and in schools.

Young said that one of the highlights of leading TF Medical was seeing the public trust the teams earned. Young expressed the importance of his personal faith throughout his mobilization and his gratitude for the opportunity to serve the people of his state.

"COVID was bigger than all of us," said Young, "all the credit and glory goes to [God]."

TF Medical stood down on March 15, 2022 and Young returned to his Army civilian job in IMCOM-Pacific's G3/5/7 at Fort Shafter.

"Now he's back in the office, we welcomed him back wholeheartedly, and he has jumped right back into the fray," said Bradshaw.

"I was gone for two years and they've been very supportive ... I really appreciate it," said Young.



State, county, and federal emergency management partners participated in a simulated Emergency Operations Center activation during the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency's (HI-EMA) Makani Pahili hurricane preparedness exercise on May 9, 2022. HI-EMA also conducted a senior leader executive summit as part of Makani Pahili at Aloha Tower on May 10. | Photos courtesy of HI-EMA

