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# Gen Takemoto takes top honors

Brigadier General Francis S. Takemoto, who retired May 4 as commanding general of the 29th Infantry Brigade, Hawaii Army National Guard, received the Hawaii National Guard's highest award during retirement and change of command ceremonies at Fort Ruger, May 4.

General Takemoto was presented the Hawaii National Guard Medal for Merit by Major General Benjamin J. Webster.

The medal is awarded only for acts of heroism or bravery, or for extraordinary achievement resulting in an accomplishment, so exceptional and outstanding as to clearly set the individual apart from his comrades or from other persons in similar circumstances.

General Takemoto, the first American of Japanese ancestry to achieve that rank in the American armed forces, is cited for "exemplary achievements while assigned as

Commanding General, 29th Infantry Brigade, during the period October 4, 1963 to May 3, 1968."

General Takemoto undertook the task of molding the brigade into a cohesive combat unit and producing a combat ready brigade in minimum time.

He was cited for his "inspiring leadership and unprecedented personal interest and devotion," which guided the brigade through the difficult task of reorganizing and simultaneously activating

new units, such as the 29th Support Battalion and 1st Battalion, 487th Artillery.

He progressively led the brigade through each phase of training until it reached its peak readiness of today.

General Takemoto first joined the Guard in 1946 as a captain, after having served through World War II with the 100th Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team. Among his medals he holds the Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

He started his military service in 1935, upon receiving his commission as a second lieutenant through the Senior ROTC program.

General Takemoto is presently principal of Ma-noa Elementary School, Honolulu.