



The Hawaii Youth Challenge Academy cadets (L-R) Andre Fletcher, Arvin Vila, Sei Wada, Marc Joshua Inay Bismonte, perform burpee exercises during the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps virtual physical fitness competition Mar 30, 2021, Kapolei, Hawaii. The HIYCA cadets competed against 14 other schools from across the island and won the top three places in the novice group. (Courtesy Photo)

Youth Challenge Academy Takes Top Three Places

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

The Hawaii National Guard's Youth Challenge Academy Kalaheo (HIYCA-K) cadets won first, second and third place in the virtual Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) Physical Fitness competition on Mar 30, 2021.

The cadets competed against 14 other schools from across the island in the novice category. Each school had an opportunity to enter up to five, four-person teams for the fitness challenge in the novice or open category. HIYCA had a total of five teams competing in the virtual challenge.

Cadets submitted pre-filmed videos of themselves performing six exercises for judging with winners selected in early April.

Participants were judged on the number of repetitions they correctly completed during the six-minute time limit with one-minute for each of the following exercises: shoulder taps, push-ups, flutter kicks, mountain climbers, sit-ups

and burpees.

"Six minutes felt like forever," said Cadet Albert Albert, Kalihi. "We did additional PT sessions to help us train."

Albert said the reason for their success was because they focused on performing the six exercises within six minutes consistently.

He mentioned that he was scared and didn't think, he would be able to complete the exercises in the allotted time and was very tired after doing the final exercise of burpees.

"Everyone was struggling while doing the sit-ups," said Albert. "It seemed easy to me, because that's my strength."

When the director announced

our team had won third place we began to scream for joy and didn't even hear him announce that we had also won first and second place as well.

"I was shocked when the results were announced," said Albert. "I didn't think we were that good."

Brig Gen (Ret) Bruce Oliveira, Director community programs, said he was not surprised the cadets had won the top three places in the virtual JROTC Physical Fitness competition.

"Physical fitness is an integral part of cadet life," said Oliveira. "Mastery of the physical fitness component is an indication of a cadet's progress through the

academy."

The HIYCA program academic classes are grounded on the high school equivalency test (HiSET)

curriculum with the Adult Basic Education norm test and serves to evaluate educational performance and progress.

"At-Promise Youth" completing the Hawaii National Guard Youth Challenge program are more likely than their at-risk counterparts to have obtained a GED or high school diploma," said Oliveira

Albert said if it wasn't for the program, he would be getting into trouble and smoking his life away.

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