



KUKUI MOKU

154th WING HAWAII AIR NATIONAL GUARD | JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM

100 YEARS OF AIR REFUELING



ALSO IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

- MEMORIAL DAY 2023
- 154TH MDG MAKES HISTORY
- YOKOTA AIRSHOW
- FRIENDSHIP FESTIVAL

Inside KŪKĀ'ILIMOKU

**JULY
2023**

STAFF

COMMAND TEAM

Brig. Gen. Phillip L. Mallory
Col. Regina Komine
Chief Master Sgt. Carol Orr

PAO

1st Lt. Deborah Kwan

PA STAFF

Master Sgt. Mysti Bicoy
Tech. Sgt. Tabitha Hurst
Tech. Sgt. Nicholas Brown
Staff Sgt. Orlando Corpuz
Staff Sgt. John Linzmeier
Senior Airman Robert Cabuco
AIC Roann Gatdula

Published by

154th Wing Public Affairs Office

360 Mamala Bay Drive
JBPHH, Hawaii 96853
Phone: (808) 789-0419

Email: 154wg.pa@us.af.mil
URL: www.154wg.af.mil

Kuka'ilimoku SUBMISSIONS

Articles:

- Articles range from 200 to 2,000 words. All articles should be accompanied by multiple high-resolution images.
- Include first names, last names and military ranks. Always verify spelling.
- Spell out acronyms, abbreviations and full unit designations on first reference.

Photographs:

- Highest resolution possible: MB files, not KB.
- No retouched photos, no special effects.
- Include the photographer's name and rank, and a caption: what is happening in the photo, who is pictured and the date and location.

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A farewell

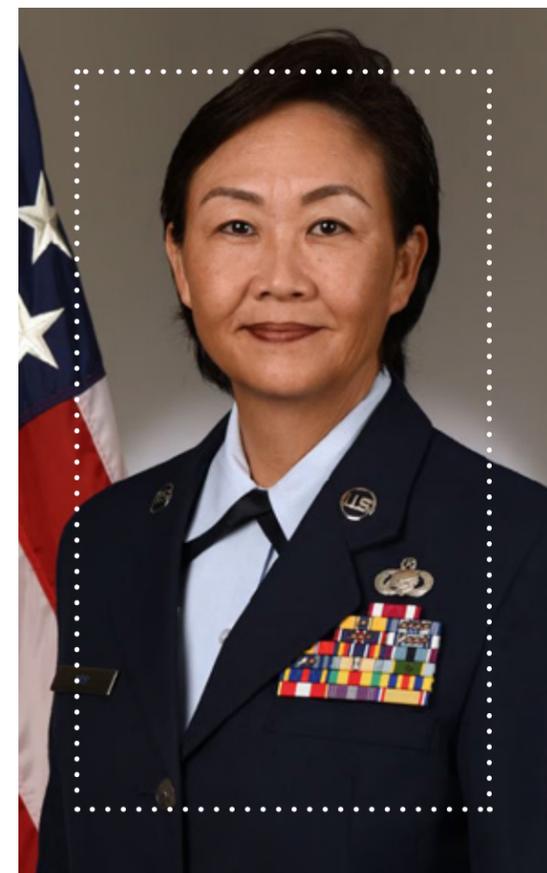
message from

the 154th Wing

Command Chief

Aloha Teammates,
First and foremost, it has been an utmost honor to serve alongside each of you these past 36 years. You continue to volunteer and flawlessly execute the ACE concepts, Domestic Operations, RCP requirements and State Partnership Programs, just to name a few, while maintaining your military professionalism with dignity and pride. I want to personally thank you for your service and commitment to the mission sets of the HIANG, our Nation, the State of Hawaii, and our communities. Mahalo!!!

My final message to you is to continue to support the 154th Wing Priorities of 'Ohana, Readiness, and Partnership. If you haven't recently done so, please thank your families for supporting you. Without them we would not be successful in our mission. Complete all your mandatory readiness requirements, PME and upgrade training in a timely manner as we must be vigilant and ready to remain in competition with our adversaries. Finally, continue to foster and strengthen relationships with our Active Duty counterparts and other affiliated agencies. While it may be challenging at times, together we will provide lethal air power. Once again, Thank You!!!
With the fondest Aloha, Chief Orr.



If you haven't recently done, please thank your families for supporting what you do for our organization for without them we would not be successful in our mission.

FUELING MIND, BODY & SOUL

Inaugural Resiliency Run raises morale and mental health awareness

By **154th Wing Public Affairs**

It was an incredible day at the Aloha Aina Park Running Trail as volunteers and participants gathered to support mental health awareness during the first Resilience Race. The event was held May 20th to raise awareness, promote resilience, and foster a sense of unity within the community. It was a day filled with energy, spirit and a shared commitment to mental well-being.

Teams brought their warrior spirit to the race, and their participation was both inspiring and impactful. The HIANG embodied the spirit of resilience and earned a well-deserved "Warrior Spirit Award," recognizing the most participants in the race.

The Resilience Race was not limited to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam military personnel alone. The event saw the active participation of spouses and children who contributed to the vibrant atmosphere and united in support of mental health awareness. Their presence served as a reminder that mental health affects not only those in uniform but also their families and loved ones. By coming together and participating in the race, they showed dedication to breaking the stigma surrounding mental health and building a strong support system within the community.

This inaugural race began a journey toward greater awareness, understanding, and support for mental health. It served as a reminder that we can overcome any obstacle together and embrace our resilience. With each step taken and every conversation shared, we moved one step closer to breaking the stigma and fostering a community where mental health is a priority.

Yumi Panui, Director of Psychological Health, said that promoting resilience focused events are just one way to emphasize the importance of self-care. "Life happens to us all," said Panui. "Resilience helps us to adapt and overcome in those times of inevitable adversity when life happens. My hope is that we intentionally foster the grit that we need to live our best lives."



THE *Seasons* OF OUR LIVES

By **Capt. Stephen Becker**

Chaplain's Corner

After all of the “busy-ness” of the summer months, often we think of September as a time when things slow down a bit. But I wonder how true that really is. September is often a month of transition for many people. Children go back to school. Young recent high-school graduates start a completely new phase of their lives—college or vocational school. Teachers and Professors head back to their vocations. Pastors start thinking about Advent and sermon series. We in the military start looking to the new fiscal year—what will it bring? Summer ends and Fall begins. In fact, September is statistically one of the months where more people retire than others, followed only by the end of December. These are the seasons of our lives.

The coming and going of the seasons of our lives can be frightening, often because we don't know what lies ahead. But is there reason to be afraid? In crisis management, we are taught to keep people as aware as possible of the changes ahead in order to minimize the anxiety of the unknown. Seasonal changes don't always allow for that!

Amidst these constant changes, we remember the words of the Prophet Isaiah, *“Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”* (Isaiah 40:28-31)

So as the changes of our lives come before us, whether in our personal lives, our professional lives, or in our military lives, we remember that our God is always with us, in good times and in bad. Yes, seasons may come and go. But He never does! And that means we don't have to be afraid of these changes!

- Chaplain Becker





**AIRMAN'S CHILDHOOD
EXPERIENCE DRIVES
ENVIRONMENTAL
MISSION**
By Staff. Sgt. Orlando Corpuz

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Greg Otake had always respected the environment and its connection with the human condition. Growing up in Hilo, Hawaii, helped galvanize that view.

"I worked at my mother's gas station, and she had to follow the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Health regulations," said Otake. "So early on, I was exposed to regulatory rules that agencies put in place to protect the environment."

A small fuel leak at the gas station helped solidify his convictions regarding the effects of pollution and the importance of protecting the environment.

"We had a fuel leak that we had to deal with," Otake said. "I remember construction workers and engineers being everywhere. Digging this up, repairing that, fixing this, it was kind of a big deal and something that I didn't fully understand at first."

Otake's mother explained to the young man what the big deal was all about.

"She explained that we (gas station) were right up the road from where I swam," Otake said, "And if this stuff ever got further down the soil and penetrated through the ground, me and my friends' swimming area could get contaminated, and we wouldn't be swimming there anymore."

It was partly through these experiences as well as an affinity for the outdoors, that led Otake to pursue a career in the military as a bioenvironmental engineering specialist with the Hawaii Air National Guard.

Airmen in this career field manage activities in radiological health, occupational health, industrial hygiene, and environmental protection. They are also adept at reviewing work orders, plans, contracts, and specifications to ensure compliance with environmental and occupational health directives.

It's an expertise that makes Otake well suited for his current assignment with Joint Task Force-Red Hill (JTF-RH) and its mission to safely and expeditiously defuel the Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility (RHBFSF).

The underground fuel storage facility sits a few hundred feet above a major aquifer that provides much of the fresh drinking water for the island of Oahu. Before actual defueling of the tanks can occur, repairs to the facility, piping networks, and systems must be completed.

"We (JTF-RH) have many contractors that do repairs," Otake said. "A big part of my responsibilities involve understanding the contracts and auditing the work the contractors are performing to help give leadership a clear picture of how the repair work is proceeding."

Born and raised in Hawaii, Otake credits his small-town upbringing with shaping his views on mother nature. On the eastern shores of Hawaii island, there are no concrete jungles of a city metropolis. Instead, humble structures exist, surrounded by lush tropical vegetation. The hustle and bustle of the big city are nonexistent, replaced by the easy vibes of small-town living, where residents are "in-tune" with nature.

"Hilo is really just a small town," Otake said. "As far as being environmentally conscious, I would say we're definitely cognizant of taking care of the environment and being

respectful in our relationship with mother nature. There are reminders everywhere of its beauty and power as well as how fragile it is."

Hawaii is more than just a place for Otake. It is a way of life with a unique culture, history, and a spirit that he feels proud to be part of. It's a connection he brings daily to his work at JTF-RH as he helps preserve the natural resources of his beloved home.

"Hawaii is home definitely," Otake said. "I'm proud to be born and raised here, and it's satisfying that someone from the Big Island can come here to the task force and make a

difference." Otake is among a contingent of Hawaii Air National Guardsmen assigned to JTF-RH. Being born and raised in Hawaii, not only do these Airmen provide expertise in their respective fields, they provide valuable perspectives as "local" subject matter experts.

"Tech. Sgt. Otake and all others from Hawaii, both military and civilian, helped the rest of our team better understand the connection between the land, water, and people," said U.S. Navy Vice Adm. John Wade, JTF-RH commander. "This appreciation has given us greater clarity and purpose as we execute this incredibly important mission."

Upon graduating from Waiakea High School in 2003, Otake enlisted in the U.S. Navy to "see the world", but his goal was always to come home. At the end of his Navy commitment, a chance meeting with a Hawaii Air National Guard officer brought military service and Hawaii back into play.

Now, after completing many special assignments in service to country and state, Otake considers his latest position with the JTF-RH, one of the most important in his two-decade career.

"I think most everyone here at the task force understands the importance of this mission," Otake said. "Everybody is affected by water, everybody. Civilian, military, everyone. From my perspective, I can't think of a more meaningful mission right now."

It's also not lost on him that the fuel spill at his mother's gas station in his youth may have somehow led him to being a part of JTF-RH.

"It's kind of ironic that a fuel spill at my mom's station all those years ago helped me realize the importance of protecting the environment," Otake said. "And now I'm here at the task force dealing with fuel and the environment, only this time on a much larger scale."



Tech. Sgt. Greg Otake, a bioenvironmental engineering specialist assigned to JTF-RH, reviews Red Hill Bulk Fuel Storage Facility repair contracts March 28, at JBPH-H.



Airmen, Soldiers Converge For Cultural, Spouse Appreciation Day

By **Bernhard Lashleyleidner**

Airman, Soldiers, DoD civilians and family members of the Hawaii National Guard attended the combined cultural, spousal appreciation and family day celebration in honor of Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Month at the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's assembly hall on May 25.

The purpose of the event was to celebrate the diverse array of cultures across the globe. Patrons of the event experienced cultural education, music, dance, costumes, and cuisine that originates from all over the world.

AAPI Heritage Month is observed annually in May, dedicating 31 days to celebrating and honoring Asian Americans and Pacific Islands heritage; their cultures, history and accomplishments.

Cadets from Hawaii Youth Challenge Academy, Kalaeloa campus, treated the audience to three traditional performances of Samoan, Hawaiian and Tahitian dances. AAPI heritage month originated in 1977 by former congressional staffer Jeanie Jew, who proposed the concept of establishing an entire month to honor Asian and



IT TAKES A TEAM THE FOOTBALL ANALOGY

By **Chief Master Sgt. Monte Hokoana**

Those of us who are Football fans understand that there are 11 players on the field and each position is uniquely different (Diverse) from the other. Although we can group some positions together such as linemen, linebackers, running backs, wide receivers, and defensive backs, each position in those groupings are still uniquely different.

The quarterback who calls the plays for the offense can either pass the football, hand it off, or run with it. The running back either blocks, runs with the football, or catches a pass. The receivers primarily catch passes, blocks, or provide distractions. The linemen either blocks or create the hole for the running back to run through. If the offense uses Tight Ends, they can dual role as a receiver or linemen depending on the play called.

Each position is assigned its own unique role and each player must work together to accomplish their team's objective, dependency.

Players of successful offensive teams understand and respect each other's different roles and how it contributes to their overall objective. They also understand how each position of the offense has to be different (diverse) for it to be effective and successful. Imagine an offense with 11

quarterbacks, or 11 running backs, or 11 receivers, etc. This would be too one-sided and not very effective.

Like the players of a successful offensive team, if we can respect, trust, encourage, and depend on each other, free from any negative exclusive behavior (inclusivity), we will develop a better self and allow us to be positive contributors in any group setting whether at home, at work, in sports, and/or here at the Guard.

Remember, ohana means family and no one gets left behind or forgotten.

Have a Great Guard Month!

-Chief Hokoana,
154th Wing Human
Resource Advisor



HOPIN' WITH

THE HIANG:

SQUADRON SCRIMMAGE TOURNAMENT RETURNS POST-PANDEMIC HIATUS

Story by **Darrell Bactad**

The HIANG Basketball league made a triumphant return after a four-year hiatus due to COVID-19 restrictions. The league, held at Fort Ruger Gym, saw intense competition in both the Open and Masters divisions during the two-month-long round-robin play.

In the Open division, six teams vied for the championship title: MSG, CES, Weapons, Ammo, 169th ADS, and F-22 Flightline. Meanwhile, the Masters division featured four teams: 154th MXG, Weapons, 169th ADS, and F-22 Flightline.

In the consolation Open game, Weapons and F-22 Flightline battled for the third-place position. Weapons emerged victorious with a convincing 48-34 win, securing the 3rd place trophy. Zahmann Mcadory led Weapons with 17 points, while Omar Acosta contributed 12 points for F-22 Flightline.

The Masters Championship clash pitted Weapons against F-22 Flightline. Holding an 18-point lead at halftime, Weapons dominated the game and sealed their victory with a final score of 58-42. Isaiah Locquiao led Weapons with 15 points, while Jimmy Stevens put up 16 points for F-22 Flightline in their valiant effort.

The night's highlight was the feature game between MSG and AMMO, competing for the Open Championship. The game remained closely contested at halftime, with MSG leading 25-20. Accurate three-point shooting and determined drives to the basket kept fans on the edge of their seats. However, Dennis Dedicatoria's impressive 25-foot three-pointer with 1:40 left on the clock sealed the deal for MSG. They emerged as champions with a final score of 44-33. Dennis Dedicatoria and Keoni Gibson led MSG with



12 and 11 points, respectively, while Chase Hazlewood and Robert Tanner scored six points each for AMMO.

Throughout the season, all players displayed exceptional hustle, sportsmanship, and camaraderie. Special thanks go to Staff Sgt. Joseph Nishimura, 154th AMXS, for spearheading the league's revival and to all the volunteers who contributed to its success.

Congratulations to all teams on a successful season, and the anticipation is already building for next year's tournament. Mahalo!



Photos by **Master Sgt. Andrew Jackson**



Double Honors: 297th Air Traffic Control Squadron is Nationally Recognized

by **Tech. Sgt. Nicholas Brown**

The Hawaii Adjutant General visited the 297th Air Traffic Control Squadron on June 3, to congratulate the unit for winning two prestigious awards in air traffic control.

Maj. Gen. Kenneth Hara applauded the members for their unparalleled excellence for winning the D. Ray Hardin Air Traffic Control Facility of the Year award and the Lima Site 85 Team Award.

The D. Ray Hardin Air Traffic Control Facility of the Year award recognizes dedicated professionalism and exceeding superior standards and expectations.

The Lima Site 85 Team Award recognizes their extraordinary teamwork, adaptability, and outstanding air traffic control community contributions.

In addition to the two unit-level awards, Tech. Sgt. Aldrich Francis Lanuevo, a radar, airfield, and weather systems technician, was recognized as the Radar, Airfield and Weather Systems Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year.

This is just another example of 297th ATCS Airmen raising the bar and leading the way, as the squadron was recognized for multiple national-level awards.



A Grateful Nation Never Forgets

2023 Governor's Memorial Day Ceremony

By Airman 1st Class Roann Gatdula



A sense of gratitude and remembrance filled the air at the Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery in Kaneohe during this year's Memorial Day ceremony held on May 29. This year's theme, "A Grateful Nation Never Forgets," was felt through the hearts of distinguished guests in attendance to honor the brave souls who made the ultimate sacrifice.

After a long hiatus due to the 2020 pandemic, this year's ceremony marked the return of the annual tradition under the leadership of Governor Dr. Josh Green. The ceremony also commemorated the 70th anniversary of the end of the Korean War. It was a time to reflect on the valor and courage displayed by the veterans who fought bravely to defend freedom and protect their fellow citizens.

The sight of the joint service color guard presenting the Nation's colors was a powerful reminder of the shared dedication to liberty across all branches of the military. Accompanied by the Royal Guard

of the Hawaii National Guard, the only Royal unit in the country with members all of Native Hawaiian ancestry, the ceremony became a symbol of the deep-rooted traditions and rich heritage of Hawaii.

A Honor Guard team, comprised of Hawaii National Guardsmen, performed a 21-gun salute to honor military and civilian leaders, with musical accompaniment by the Hawaii National Guard 111th Army Band.

As the ceremony came to a close, it was clear that the spirit of gratitude and camaraderie would continue to thrive in the hearts of the attendees. This Memorial Day gathering was a testament to the enduring legacy of those who served, their memory forever etched in the fabric of Hawaii and the nation.

"We extend tributes of thanks and share collective memories of our troops, as people gather here," said Ronald Han, Ret. U.S. Air Force Col., Office of Veterans' Service Director. "To all of them, on this hallowed day, we extend our deepest respect and gratitude."

Making HER-story:

Lt. Col. Elzadia Kaina becomes first female to lead 154th Medical Group

By Airman 1st Class Roann Gatdula

From a third-grade report card that stated, "Elzadia is not a leader" to making history as the first female to lead the 154th Medical Group, Lt. Col. Elzadia Kaina's journey reminds us never to let someone else's words limit our potential. Her achievement is a testament to the power of perseverance and determination.

During May drill weekend, the HIANG welcomed Lt. Col. Kaina as the new commander of the 154th Medical Group, whose mission is to ensure the medical readiness of all Airmen assigned to the HIANG.

During the ceremony, Kaina invited former and present commanders to join her for a photo opportunity to highlight the diversity and importance of representing different perspectives in leadership.

A beautiful hula performance by Kaina and her hula sisters, Carrie Tandal and Misty Hironaka, added a touch of cultural significance to the ceremony. The timeless Hawaiian song 'Pua Hone' further added to the enchanting atmosphere, showcasing the rich traditions of the islands. It was a wonderful way to celebrate this historic moment and honor the diversity within the organization.

"Don't let a third-grade report card dictate your life. If someone says you cannot do or cannot be, don't listen, go do, go be," said Kaina as she concluded her remarks.

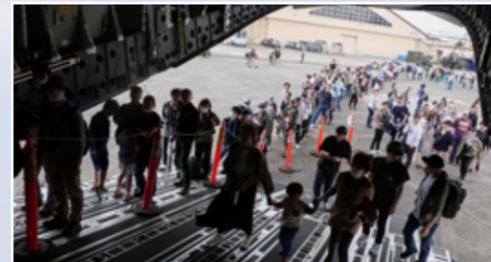
Ho'omaika'i Lt. Col. Kaina!





Pueos return to Japan in support of Japanese-American Friendship Festival

by Staff Sgt. John Linzmeier



Members of the 204th Airlift Squadron returned to Yokota Air Base May 20-21, to contribute a C-17 Globemaster III static display for the 2023 Japanese-American Friendship Festival.

The annual festival has served as a vibrant platform for fostering interactions between members of the U.S. Air Forces and the Japan Air Self-Defense Force. This year marks the eighth time the 204th AS supported the event since 2014.

“The Yokota Friendship Festival stands apart from the others because it gives the HIANG an opportunity to build international relationships with Japan,” said Lt. Col. Skip Saito, 204th Airlift Squadron pilot and mission planner. “The whole purpose of the event is to showcase the relationship between Japan and the US and how we have come together over the years.”

A crowd of nearly 200,000 attendees joined in this year’s celebration; many who demonstrated their passion for airlift by waiting more than two hours in line to interact with C-17 crewmembers and enjoy a moment at the helm of the nearly 300-ton aircraft.

Behind the scenes, the squadron’s participation in the festival was made possible by the support of exceptional volunteers. The total-force crew hailed from various units within the Hawaii Air National Guard and that of their active-duty counterparts from the 15th Wing.

Saito said that his aircrew relies heavily on the attentiveness of volunteer Airmen to make each airshow a success. While these members primarily attend to provide guidance, answer questions and support security details, he said airshow participation also provides a rich cultural experience for these top-performing Airmen and it exposes them to the operational side of the force.



The C-17 Globemaster III has earned its reputation as an indispensable asset, both in times of conflict and peace. It offers a reliable means to rapidly transport life-saving personnel and humanitarian supplies and natural disasters. Notably, some crew members participating in this year's Friendship Festival had previously used the C-17 as a platform to respond to the devastating tsunami that struck the coast of Honshu, Japan, in 2011.

The partnership between the U.S. Air Force and the Japanese people serves as a cornerstone of their shared commitment to regional security and international cooperation.

Saito expressed that this had been an exceptionally busy year, possibly due to the impact of COVID, as the event saw a remarkable increase in attendance compared to previous years.

“There were a lot more aircraft as well so that surely had a hand in the numbers of attendees,” said Saito. “Japan doesn’t have aircraft in their military as large as the USAF. The C-17, C-5, and KC-10 are massive aircraft in their eyes, and it is something they all want to experience. With Hawaii being a huge tourism attraction for Japanese people, they tend to gravitate to a Hawaii military aircraft.”

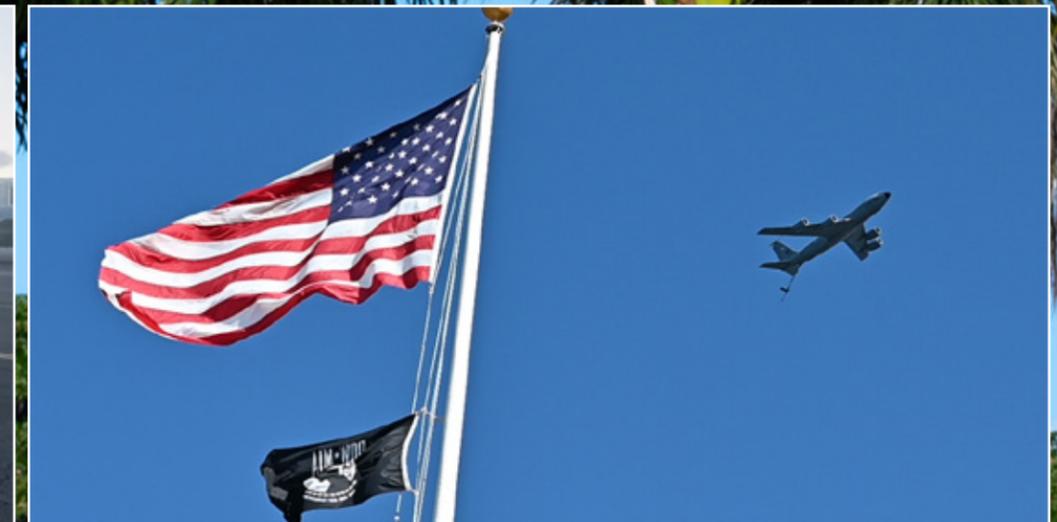
Hawaii Air National Guard Commemorates 100 years of Air Refueling with Historic Flyover



The Hawaii Air National Guard's 154th Wing conducted a flyover above communities across the Southern and Eastern portions of Oahu, June 27, 2023, honoring the 100th year anniversary of aerial refueling.

Four KC-135 Stratotankers from the 203rd Air Refueling Squadron participated in the flyover after wrapping up a routine training sortie off the coast of Hawaii.

By 154th Wing Public Affairs





30 years and routinely supports air-to-air refueling missions and global deployments. Since its establishment on December 10, 1992, the 203rd ARS has been a critical component of the Pacific Air Force's operation.

The first commander of the 203rd ARS, retired Col. Walt Kaneakua, returned to his former unit to witness the 100-year milestone and recount the squadron's legacy and the pride it brings to Hawaii.

"The unit is comprised of hard working men and women that dedicate their energies to air power, and that's the most important portion of the unit," said Kaneakua. "It's the most important part of the legacy that carries on 30 years later after we have started it."

One of the things that sets the 203rd ARS aircraft apart from the rest of the U.S. Air Force's 'tanker' fleet is that each jet is honored with a name that stems from the traditional Hawaiian language. Each tail flash is emblazoned with the word 'Hoku', Hawaiian for star; each representing a star or constellation.

Kaneakua wasn't the only guest to experience the flight operations. Airmen who hail from various Hawaii ANG units and career fields boarded the aircraft to partake on an incentive flight, many of whom



The flyover was part of a nationwide tribute demonstrating global air refueling capabilities in real time. More than 150 tankers from 26 Total Force installations took part in the event.

Mission planners utilized existing resources, flight hours, and personnel dedicated to training purposes, ensuring no additional cost to taxpayers. After wrapping up a refueling mission with locally-based F-22 Raptors, the pilots directed their course to Kalaeloa, Punchbowl, Kaneohe, and Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam areas.

Aerial refueling serves as a force multiplier, increasing the range, lethality, flexibility and

versatility of combat aircraft. Additionally, Stratotankers carry cargo and passengers, perform aeromedical evacuations, and enable strategic deterrence for the United States.

"Air refueling is the cornerstone of our Nation's air power, propelling it to new heights and unleashing its limitless capabilities," said Maj. Koani Lau, 203rd ARS director of operations. "Air refueling epitomizes our unwavering dedication to safeguarding freedom and project unparalleled power, etching a permanent chapter in aviation history."

The Hawaii ANG has been operating the KC-135 for over

have never been near a KC-135.

"Air refueling propels our Nation's air power across the skies, unleashing its full potential," said Gen. Mike Minihan, Air Mobility Command commander. "It connects our strategic vision with operational reality, ensuring we can reach any corner of the globe with unwavering speed and precision. Air refueling embodies our resolve to defend freedom and project power, leaving an indelible mark on aviation history."

On June 27, 1923, the first aerial refueling was

accomplished by U.S. Army Air Service aviators, demonstrating innovation and tenacity that thrived in Airmen of that era.

"As we embark on the next 100 years of air refueling, we are keenly aware of the indispensable role it plays in supporting our operations and those of our esteemed allies and partners," expressed Brig. Gen. Phillip L. Mallory, 154th Wing commander. "Tanker gas serves as the lifeblood that energizes not only our own remarkable weapon systems, such as the F-22 and C-17, but also empowers the reach and

effectiveness of our global allies and increases the lethality of the Joint Force. The success we achieve in our missions, the seamless interoperability we enjoy, and the collective security we uphold are owed in large part to the unwavering dedication of the tanker community. With great pride, we stand at the forefront of fulfilling the immense demand for air refueling and propelling the triumph of our joint and multinational forces."

Hawaii Air National Guard's 154th FSS Wraps Up Successful HSRT Event

By Tech. Sgt. Tabitha Hurst



The 154th Force Support Squadron, along with other units, wrapped up a week-long Home Station Readiness Training (HSRT) event on April 7, at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

The training was intended to prepare Airmen for standing up bare bases and providing hands-on training to build proficiency in essential tasks necessary for contingency operations.

A total of 70 participants from the FSS, the 298th Air Defense Group on Wheeler, and the 162nd Wing from the Arizona Air National Guard participated in the training.

Master Sgt. Priscilla Kim described the event as a "training facelift," which involved Silver Flag instructors providing the much-needed hands-on training to airmen who are typically busy with wing operations.

During the HSRT, they are receiving this much-needed training from Silver Flag instructors, all while building relationships with other units.

A Silver Flag instructor is a highly trained instructor who provides hands-on training in a variety of skills related to air base ground defense, base recovery, and contingency response.

"The HSRT is a biannual requirement, but with the ACE concept we're looking to revamp this training in fiscal year 24" said Tech. Sgt. Randal Asuncion base services technician explained. "We're looking to do this a lot more often to build our Airman the new people that come in and

the key thing we want to get out of this is proficiency."

The preparation for this training involved several critical roles, including staging equipment like the tents and SPEKs. The planning took four to six months and was carried out by mainly drill-status guardsmen. Preplanning allowed time to invite Arizona Airman to participate and time to request instructors to conduct the week-long training. Since the training is constantly changing, having instructors come to Hawaii from Silver Flag on Dobbins Air Force Base will help Airman learn the new process and how to implement it during drill weekends.

"This is going to benefit the Airman, to build proficiency," Asuncion said, "having an instructor that can be there on the side of them answering all the questions they need."

"If we bring them here and we know that we have professional instructors here, then we're going to guarantee that the training has been done the right way." Master Sgt. Keith Smith explained. "They're also really nice people, that might have something to do with it. It's a nice place to come out and train and it's easy to incentivize that." Smith traveled from FSS Silver Flag on Dobbins AFB to train members throughout the week. "We're very excited about the future with the 154th, they've always done a great job when they come to visit us and we're more than happy to come out and train them anytime they need it."



This training provides the opportunity for members of the 154th Force Support Squadron to enhance their skills and build their proficiency in essential tasks. It also allows them to train for bare base roles that are critical in contingency operations. The HSRT is an opportunity for members to work collaboratively with other units and develop relationships, which is invaluable during deployment.

Moreover, the training highlights the Hawaii Air National Guard's capability as a training location for other guard units, potentially leading to more joint training opportunities in the future.

"People from all over are coming in to play with us, and we get a chance to network," Kim said. "We never get to train together, but this is a chance where we can make mistakes and do all the things, and I love that."



154th FSS NCO earns Air Force-level Award

By Tech. Sgt. Nicholas Brown

The 154th Force Support Squadron gathered to celebrate a significant milestone on July 9, as one of its top-performing Airmen was promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant. Amidst the celebration, the event also shone a spotlight on another remarkable achievement—Senior Airman Brandon Mancini was honored with a prestigious Air Force level award. Throughout his tenure as a Senior Airman, Mancini showcased exceptional leadership skills, overseeing a large-scale operation with unmatched proficiency. As a senior non-commissioned officer, he played a vital role in revitalizing abandoned programs and implementing effective procedures, thereby providing invaluable support to the Air National Guard's largest and most complex Wing.

The highlight of the promotion ceremony was the presentation of the A1 Awards Force Support Reserve Component Airman of the Year (Installation) to Staff Sgt. Brandon Mancini. This unique and esteemed award is bestowed upon the top-

performing Airmen in the manpower personnel career fields, a testament to Mancini's unwavering dedication and outstanding contributions.

One of his remarkable achievements included coordinating round-the-clock coverage and conducting audits to ensure qualifications and training compliance for a 300-personnel Expeditionary Air Group. This group played a pivotal role in supporting Operation MYTAI, a joint Australian Agile Combat Employment exercise, leading to the successful execution of Joint Force Lethality—an area of utmost importance for INDOPACOM.

Additionally, in his role as the duty-status program manager, Brandon's meticulous attention to detail facilitated the demobilization of 1,200 records, thereby enhancing data integrity and strengthening accurate strength accountability reports for combatant commanders.

His passion for team cohesion and problem-solving skills came to the fore when he organized life-saving Tactical Combat Casualty Care

training and expertly guided a team to qualify over 50 Mission Capable Airmen. These commendable leadership qualities contributed significantly to re-establishing readiness and ensuring the success of critical missions.

Senior Master Sgt. Mandy Mahuka, 154th Force Support Squadron Flight Chief, described Brandon as not only an exceptional professional but also a great person overall, with a kind-hearted nature, unwavering composure under pressure, and a vibe of positive energy that is truly infectious.

With humility, Staff Sgt. Mancini extended his gratitude to everyone he has worked with, recognizing the profound impact of their mentorship on shaping him into the person he is today.

RISING STAR:

169TH ADS AIRMAN'S ALERTNESS AVERTS POTENTIAL CRISIS IN AIR DEFENSE

By Airman 1st Class Roann Gatdula



One of the most junior Airmen in the 298th Air Defense Group was commended by Pacific Air Forces leadership in May for her immediate response to action in a real-world operation.

Airman 1st Class Faith Calaro, 169th Air Defense Squadron surveillance technician, received a commander's coin from Gen. Kenneth S. Wilsbach, commander of Pacific Air Forces, for her role in demonstrating quick decision-making that helped uphold national security.

As Calaro was settling into her workstation during a routine shift, an unfamiliar radar reading instantly caught her attention. The reading occurred within the first minute of assuming the radar station and her training instincts kicked in immediately, allowing her to flag the discrepancy with a sense of urgency. She alerted her leadership of the identified discrepancies, setting off a chain reaction among a highly-trained team of air defense professionals. Validation procedures followed, and her discovery was soon elevated to the regional air operations center and then the Pentagon.

While these readings may seem like mere blips on a screen to the untrained eye, small details that go unnoticed can be the difference between life and death.

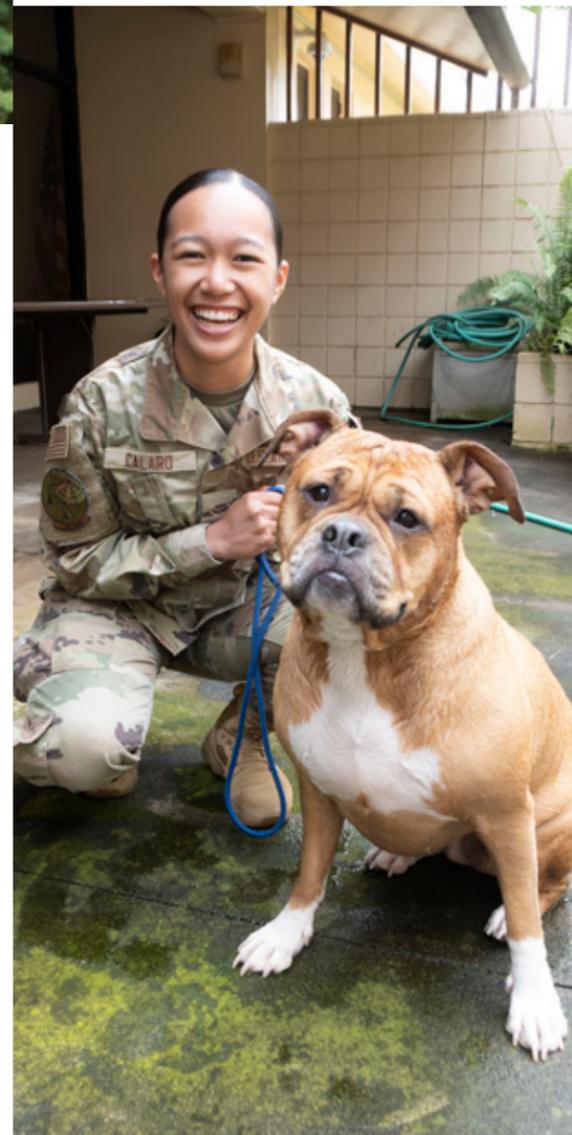
Air defense agencies have a robust information-sharing network that enables them to immediately relay critical information that poses a threat to national security at a moment's notice.

"It's definitely an honor and privilege for me [to receive this award], but really, it was the crew and leadership," Calaro said. "I'm surrounded by a lot of aloha spirit yet still challenged to always improve."

Surveillance technicians like Calaro have a critical role in detecting, identifying, and tracking foreign and domestic aircraft. This entails identifying potential aerial threats in the 298th ADG's region of surveillance, which includes the State of Hawaii and Guam. They operate and maintain electronic warfare, radar surveillance, and computer systems in a secure location, ensuring that the Hawaii Air National Guard is on alert and ready to engage potential adversaries and helping to maintain air space safety.

Senior Master Sgt. Brandon Trehern, one of Calaro's senior enlisted leaders, said her initiative displayed the capability, determination, and motivation of Airmen from the 169th ADS. These qualities also showcased the Hawaii Air National Guard's capabilities to Wilsbach.

"Do not mistake Airman 1st Class Calaro's humility and subtle demeanor for weakness," Trehern said.



"Her motivation, determination, and no-fear attitude is showcased when she performs her duties with a quiet confidence portrayed by her deliberate and forthright communication skills."

Despite only being in the Air Force for less than a year, at the age of 18, Calaro has already taken on a level of responsibility that can impact day-to-day operations.

She emphasized the importance of staying optimistic and surrounding oneself with positive influences, crediting the mentorship of her primary instructor Senior Airman Keilah Kanahele, for providing her with the tools and curriculum needed to help her become an ideal ST.

A full-time Active Guard Reserve Airman, Calaro attributes her passion for the military to her love for action and military movies. Inspired by action heroes portrayed on screen, she aspires to be that 'cool person' who fearlessly takes on challenging missions. She also mentions her father, who once expressed a desire to join the Air National Guard, and now lives vicariously through her accomplishments.

"With current worldly activities or events going on, I believe that our mission is extremely important, we are the tip of the spear," Calaro said. "The 169 ADS is a hidden gem in the Hawaii Air National Guard and I can't help but strongly believe in the mission."

Airmen like Calaro serve as a reminder of the role individuals have towards the success of the mission. Her intelligence and motivation continues to inspire others and show that you're never too young to make a big impact.

"I'd like to say that all of this and what I've been through so far has all been a miracle and the wonderful work of God," Calaro said. "He gave me this opportunity and potential to experience a great, positive beginning to my career."



COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALISTS PLAY CRUCIAL ROLE IN GUAM'S TYPHOON RECOVERY EFFORT

by Staff Sgt. John Linzmeier

Guardsmen from the 154th Communications Squadron provided critical support to the Guam National Guard's Joint Task Force from May 27th to June 16th in response to a typhoon that struck the island.

Following Typhoon Mawar's impact, Master Sgt. Neil Fujinaga, Staff Sgt. Robert Shikina and Senior Airman Katarina Kossen mobilized from their home unit in Hawaii flew to the Guam Army National Guard Readiness Center to set up and maintain mobile communication systems.

Kossen, a radio frequency transmission systems specialist, said she was shocked when she first saw the storm's aftermath. While this was the first time she was selected to serve overseas, with sightings of knocked-down power lines, uprooted trees and

debris scattered in all directions, Kossen's arrival evoked a sense of nostalgia.

"Guam reminded me of home in a lot of ways," said Kossen, "so I felt like I was there to help my brothers and sisters. It hurt to see this community's infrastructure struggling and that helped fulfill a sense of purpose."

Throughout the small team's activation, their expertise centered around the Joint Incident Site Communications Capability system. The mobile station provided essential data, voice, and radio communication to the Joint Operations Center. Operations personnel relied on the JISCC's satellite network and antenna systems to help relay information to guardsmen posted throughout the island.

Due to widespread power outages, the National Guard established traffic control points at major intersections and at collection points for green waste and debris that was left behind.

In an effort to help streamline communication throughout the task force, the 154th CS Airmen also integrated a base station communication hub inside the JOC. This served as a consolidated stack of radios that expedited the flow of communication between the JOC and the dispatched disaster relief teams.

troubleshooting, but a rewarding experience overall. He attributes this to the comradery and positive attitudes of his Guam counterparts.

"The people we worked with in Guam were wonderful," said Shikina. "They had great hospitality, they were caring, and they made sure we ate well, even though they were the ones trying to recover. One of the guys lost his roof, but he was still cooking for us every day and that wasn't even his job. I absolutely won't forget their friendliness."

Airmen of the 154th Communications Squadron, assist members of the Guam National Guard with emergency communications equipment following Typhoon Mawar in Barrigada May 28. The Category 4 storm brought torrential rains and winds of up to 150 mph, temporarily degrading internet and cellphone service on the island. Photo by Mark Scott.



High-speed and commercial internet was also in high demand to make up for degraded network services caused by damage from the storm. Fujinaga, Kossen and Shikina were able to help mediate this issue by setting up a Starlink satellite connection, providing more efficient methods for service members collaborate on the recovery mission.

Shikina, who specialized in network systems operations, said the days were long and filled with plenty of

In recognition of providing technical expertise to the JTF and supporting the people of Guam during a time of great need, Fujinaga, Shikina and Kossen were ceremoniously honored with plaques by Brig. Gen. Christopher Faurot, Guam Air National Guard commander.

