

WEARE MCBH NEWSLETTER

Keeping our Marines and Neighbors Informed...

Vol. 4, Issue 3, March 2026

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MARINE CORPS BASE HAWAI'I

MCBH Hosts Makahiki Closing Ceremony

Story by Lance Cpl. Carlos Daniel Chavez-Flores

MARINE CORPS BASE HAWAI'I – U.S. Marines and members of the local community gathered at Pyramid Rock beach, traditionally known as Ku'au, on Marine Corps Base Hawai'i (MCBH) for the closing ceremony of Makahiki, a traditional Hawaiian season dedicated to peace, reflection, and preparation for the year ahead on February 14, 2026.

Kristi Kaluhiwa, a community relations specialist at MCBH, explained that Makahiki was traditionally a time for communities to gather, resolve issues, and prepare for what lay ahead. "Traditionally, the men would plan for war," she said. "They would also gather together to discuss issues and concerns, and how to best solve them, while women traditionally held their own

private ceremonies by the ocean."

The ceremony marked the end of Makahiki and is characterized by celebration, giving thanks, and play. "The opening occurs in November and lasts until February," said Kaluhiwa. "The Makahiki closing ceremony is the finishing of the time of peace and marks the beginning of all planning for the remainder of the year, lasting until October."

Kaluhiwa emphasized that building relationships between the installation and the local community helps service members better understand cultural practices connected to the land. "Anytime you go to somebody's house, you always respect what their rules are," she said. "The only way you're going to find out what the cultural practices are is to be involved and to engage to build relationships." Ceremonies like

Makahiki are an opportunity for Marines and Sailors stationed at the base to connect with community members and learn more about the history and culture of the land.

Mōkapu Peninsula, where the base is located, holds deep historical and cultural significance. "Many of the cultural practitioners who led the ceremony are lineal descendants of people who once lived in the He'eia community," Kaluhiwa noted, "with family history or documentation tying them to the area."

During the ceremony, U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Brian Wolford, commanding general of Marine Corps Installations Pacific, received a traditional offering: a weapon presented as a symbol of respect between warriors. "To present that offering is like an acknowledgment... [Read More](#)

Beyond the Field: NFL Super Bowl Champion, Vince Wilfork, Tours MCBH

Story by Lance Cpl. Tania Guerrero

MARINE CORPS BASE HAWAI'I - Vince Wilfork, a former National Football League player for the New England Patriots and Houston Texans, visited Marine Corps Base Hawai'i (MCBH) on Feb. 10, 2026, to engage with Marines as an incoming USO ambassador. During his visit, Wilfork met with Marines at Marine Aerial Refuel Transport Squadron 153 (VMGR-153) and Marine Wing Support Squadron 174 (MWSS-174), 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, where he learned about their roles and expressed appreciation for their continued service.

Wilfork first met with Col. Jeremy Beaven, the commanding officer of

MCBH, and Sgt. Maj. Adan Moreno, sergeant major of MCBH, where they discussed the unique experience of Marines in Hawai'i, including the demands of serving in the Indo-Pacific, and the distance many service members may face while away from their families. During their discussion, Wilfork emphasized how important the visit is for him and how he is committed to providing continued support, purpose and belonging to service members.

"Until you see it firsthand ... and see these service members, that's when it really hits you," said Wilfork. "Everything they do to sacrifice and dedicate their lives for our freedom, in a place that's far away from everybody they know

— they're the true patriots."

As Wilfork continued his visit on base, he made his way to the workspaces of VMGR-153, conversing with Marines in different sections and thanking them for their continued service. Conversations throughout were met with smiles and laughter as they spoke with Wilfork about teamwork and shared experiences related to football and camaraderie within the Marine Corps, creating an understanding of the foundation of teamwork.

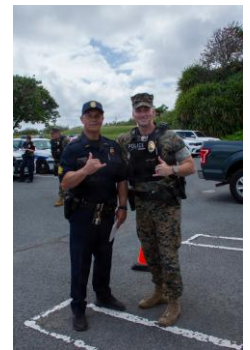
"You have no idea what you mean to all of us," said Wilfork as he looked around at the Marines in the room. "We [civilians] look at you as the heroes. You get up... [Read More](#)

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



SPOTLIGHT: MCBH and HPD Partner to Enhance Safety on H-3

U.S. Marine Corps military police officers with Provost Marshall's Office (PMO), Marine Corps Base Hawai'i (MCBH), and police officers with the Honolulu Police Department (HPD), pose for a photo during a collaborative traffic enforcement training event at MCBH, March 3, 2026. This training was utilized to ensure public safety on the H-3. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. MaKenna Hearne) [More Imagery](#)



MCBH DIGITAL MEDIA SPOTLIGHT



U.S. Marines with the Martial Arts Instructor (MAI) course run across the Fort Hase beach trail during a culminating event at Marine Corps Base Hawai'i, March 12, 2026. The MAI course strengthened Marines' mental and physical toughness, through realistic training, while preparing Martial Arts Instructors to teach basic combative techniques. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Melissa M. Hernandez) [More Imagery](#)



U.S. Marine Corps Col. Jeremy Beaven, left, commanding officer of Marine Corps Base Hawai'i (MCBH), meets with Vince Wilfork, right, former National Football League player, Super Bowl champion, and USO ambassador, during a visit to MCBH, Feb. 10, 2026. Wilfork visited the installation as part of his mission to support and uplift service members and their families, using the opportunity to strengthen community ties, and express his appreciation for Marines' dedication and sacrifice. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Tania Guerrero) [More Imagery](#)

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3RD MARINE LITTORAL REGIMENT

<https://www.3rdmardiv.marines.mil/Units/3d-mlr/>



Distributed Maritime Operations: 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment certifies its Marines during 2026 MCCRE

Story By 2ndLt. John Kim

MARINE CORPS BASE HAWAII – U.S. Marines and Sailors with 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment executed a suite of dry-fire and live-fire ranges that concluded with a Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation (MCCRE), February 6-11, 2026. The series of ranges and subsequent evaluation validated weapon system and tactical proficiency, bolstering warfighting readiness and preparing the unit for future operational requirements as a premier Stand-in Force within the Indo-Pacific.

A MCCRE is a formal evaluation derived from Marine Corps Training and Readiness standards and assigned Mission Essential Tasks, serving as a critical test to ensure standardization for operational deployments. "It was important to create a

scenario that was threat- and adversary-informed," said Lt. Col. Joshua Anderson, a future operations planning officer with 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment and the exercise director of the MCCRE. For 3rd Littoral Combat Team and 3rd Littoral Logistics Battalion, this evaluation provided a realistic, scenario-based rehearsal to refine the subordinate battalions' unique capabilities across islands in the Hawaiian archipelago.

On the Big Island of Hawaii, Pōhakuloa Training Area served as the center for 3rd MLR and its subordinate battalions to branch out and rehearse distributed maritime operations.

"PTA is a crucial training area for us; we are very limited to doing squad attacks, fireteam attacks, and [refining] basic skills while on O'ahu," said

Capt. Jason Black, a company commander with 3rd LCT. "We were able to execute some platoon attacks [on O'ahu], but this is the only place in the Hawaiian archipelago where we can execute company live-fire attacks and knock out a lot of that integration sequencing and the inclusion of all those agencies."

Key events included Marines with the 3rd LCT executing dry-fire and live-fire ranges to sustain tactical proficiency prior to the MCCRE. Marines with 3rd LLB conducted Helicopter... [Read More](#)



3RD MLR DIGITAL MEDIA SPOTLIGHT



U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Juan Afanador, a drone operator with 3rd Littoral Combat Team, 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, operates a first-person attack drone during the Marine Corps Attack Drone Competition at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, March 12, 2026. During a two-week period, the Marine Corps Attack Drone Team trained and certified U.S. Marines assigned to 3rd LCT as attack drone operators, attack drone instructors, and payload specialist instructors increasing 3rd MLR's lethality and capacity of trained and certified attack drone operators and instructors. Afanador is a native of Florida. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Jonathan Beauchamp) [More Imagery](#)

MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 24

<https://www.1stmaw.marines.mil/Subordinate-Units/Marine-Aircraft-Group-24/>



U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. Paul Cordes, commanding officer of Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron (VMGR) 153, Marine Aircraft Group 24, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, awards Sgt. Garrett Sloan, a loadmaster with VMGR-153, the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal at Marine Corps Air Station Kane'ohe Bay, Hawaii, March 5, 2026. Sloan received the award after rescuing two local children who were swept out to sea by a rip current while swimming at Makapu'u beach. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Chandler Evans) [More Imagery](#)



Royal Australian Navy sailors with the 816th Squadron, participate in aircrew training provided by Marine Aircraft Group (MAG) 24, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 37, at Marine Corps Air Station Kane'ohe Bay, Hawaii, March 17, 2026. MAG-24 and HSM-37 hosted this training in support of Rim of the Pacific 26 as well as the Helicopter Aircrew Readiness Program. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Anabelle Reed-O'Brien) [More Imagery](#)



U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. Paul Cordes, from left, commanding officer of Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 153, Marine Aircraft Group 24, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, Sgt. Garrett Sloan, a loadmaster and Sgt. Maj. Mayra Moreno, Sgt. Maj. of VMGR-153 pose for a photo, at Marine Corps Air Station Kane'ohe Bay, Hawaii, March 5, 2026. Sloan received the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal after rescuing two local children who were swept out to sea by a rip current while swimming at Makapu'u beach. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Chandler Evans) [More Imagery](#)