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Keeping our Marines and Neighbors Informed...

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MARINE CORPS BASE HAWAII

Mōkapu Elementary School Celebrates Purple Up Day 2026 at MCBH

Story by Lance Cpl. Nicholas Figueroa

MARINE CORPS BASE HAWAII -

On April 15, 2026, Mōkapu Elementary School celebrated Purple Up Day as part of the Month of the Military Child at Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH). The event acknowledged and honored the unique experiences, strengths, and sacrifices of students in military families.

Purple Up Day lets schools recognize and support military children. Representing all services branches, purple serves as a visible show of appreciation and a reminder that the experiences of military students are seen and valued. During the Month of the Military Child, the 'ohana mentality makes them feel like they are a part of something

bigger, with the entire community gathering to celebrate and support them.

As children arrived at school, they were greeted by cheering school staff and Marines holding vibrant purple signs, filling the morning with energy and joy. Adding to the warm welcome, U.S. Marine Corps Col. Jeremy Beaven, commanding officer of MCBH, personally greeted the students and opened car doors as they arrived, ensuring every child felt like a guest of honor.

"It is important for educators and students to participate because it builds understanding and empathy," said Sean Y. Lecher, school liaison of MCBH. "This helps bridge the gap between military and civilian communities and creates a more inclusive

school environment."

Military children often experience challenges that their civilian peers may not understand, such as repeated relocations, deployment stress, transitioning to new schools, and establishing new friendships on a regular basis.

"We support military kids year-round by making it part of everyday school life. That means staying connected with the school, and making sure teachers get ongoing training... [Read More](#)



EOD Marines Conduct Technology Demonstration at Marine Corps Base Hawaii

Story by Lance Cpl. Melissa Hernandez

MARINE CORPS BASE HAWAII - Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Marines with 3rd Littoral Logistics Battalion (LLB), 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment (MLR), 3rd Marine Division, conducted an EOD technological demonstration at Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH), March 13, 2026. MCBH invited Naval Information Warfare Center engineers, scientists from the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense, and private industry to this event. Showcasing the Marine Corps' innovative technologies and how to successfully integrate them into future missions.

U.S. Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Kenneth FuQua, an EOD

technician with 3rd LLB, spearheaded the operation stating, "Explosive Ordnance Disposal at MCBH has spent the last few years not only exploring emergent technologies but also developing our own for the benefit of the EOD community and the force at large."

Marines evaluated a manufactured drone system called a Rapid Aerial Counter Kinetic Orbiting Ordnance Neutralizer (RACKOON) which can harvest electronics from other drones to increase longevity and lower cost of production and maintenance. RACKOON can also carry a larger payload for longer distances than any other current additively manufactured, also known as 3-D printed Unmanned Aerial System platform. Benefits

of this drone include being equipped with offensive, defensive and intelligence gathering capabilities which assist in decision making and operational effectiveness.

Another innovative part of the demonstration was the production and application of 3D-printed shapes used for various types of demolition charges designed to safely handle explosives. These shapes were locally designed and produced by the EOD teams with the capability of penetrating steel and concrete structures. FuQua said, "The beauty of advanced manufacturing is the ability to produce what you need, when you need it. A section equipped with 3D printers and an internet connection can... [Read More](#)

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



SPOTLIGHT:

MCBH Hosts a Blood Drive Donation

A civilian worker with Tripler Army Medical Center donates blood during an Armed Services Blood Program blood drive at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, April 8, 2026. Five different blood donor centers from across the Indo-Pacific came together to host blood drives on MCBH, Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam and Schofield Barracks. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Jade K. Venegas) [More Imagery](#)



MCBH DIGITAL MEDIA SPOTLIGHT



U.S. Marines with Headquarters Battalion, Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH), participate in a 15-km conditioning hike at MCBH, April 21, 2026. The hike was conducted to sustain combat readiness and promote unit cohesion. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Nicholas Figueroa) [More Imagery](#)



Senior Advisor to the Secretary of War for Strategy, Mr. Eric J. Geressy and Marines with Marine Aircraft Group 24 pose for a group photo during a visit at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, April 22, 2026. Geressy engaged with service members and leaders across the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command to reinforce the warrior ethos, recognize troop innovation, and highlight the organization's commitment to long-term growth and operational success in the region. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Samuel Estridge) [More Imagery](#)

3RD MARINE LITTORAL REGIMENT

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



3rd MLR Joins Most Expansive Exercise Balikatan To Date

Story by 1st Lt. Duncan Stoner

3rd Marine Littoral Regiment is contributing more than 1,300 Hawai'i-based Marines and Sailors for the 41st iteration of Exercise Balikatan, an expansive multilateral exercise conducted by the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the U.S. military across the Philippine archipelago from April 20 to May 8.

Marking the 75th anniversary of the U.S.-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty, more than 17,000 personnel from the Philippines, United States, Australia, Japan, Canada, France, and New Zealand will train shoulder-to-shoulder to bolster interoperability within

an increasingly complex Indo-Pacific landscape.

Serving as a vital element of the U.S. force posture for Balikatan 2026, 3rd MLR is scheduled to conduct sophisticated, combined joint all-domain operations designed to exercise advanced maritime warfighting initiatives, refining employment concepts associated with purpose-built equipment such as the Marine Air Defense Integrated System and the Navy-Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System. This year's deployment of the NMESIS builds upon its historic inaugural appearance, when the weapon system was

deployed to the Philippines during Balikatan 2025.

These multilateral operations, integrated with 3rd MLR's Force Design informed capabilities, are a part of Balikatan's broader focus on cutting-edge training that builds upon the achievements the last 40 years.

"Balikatan is the embodiment of our nation's commitment to a strong and credible defense posture," said Philippine Army Maj. Gen. Francisco Lorenzo Jr., Armed Forces of the Philippines Education and Training Command Commander.

"This exercise is a prime opportunity... [Read More](#)

3RD MLR DIGITAL MEDIA SPOTLIGHT



U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Bowen Miles, a field artillery cannoneer, with 3rd Littoral Combat Team, 3rd Marine Littoral Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, operates a Navy-Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System during Exercise Balikatan 2026 at Cagayan North International Airport, Philippines, April 21, 2026. Balikatan is a longstanding annual exercise between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and U.S. military that represents the strength of our alliance, improves our capable combined force, and demonstrates our commitment to regional peace and prosperity. Miles is a native of Utah. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Ernesto Lagunes) [More Imagery](#)

MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 24

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



Cadets from Governor Thomas Johnson High School's Naval Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (NJROTC) in Frederick, Maryland, pose for a group photo during a visit to Marine Corps Air Station Kāne'ohe Bay, Hawai'i, April 9, 2026. The visit was part of a command-sponsored event to familiarize NJROTC cadets with military life and aviation operations at Marine Aircraft Group 24, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Anabelle Reed-O'Brien) [More Imagery](#)



U.S. Marines and Sailors with Marine Aircraft Group (MAG) 24, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing perform dynamic warmups before physical training at Marine Corps Base Hawai'i, April 9, 2026. MAG-24 hosted this event to promote unit cohesion, moral and esprit de corps among the noncommissioned officers. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Anabelle Reed-O'Brien) [More Imagery](#)



U.S. Marines sing the Marine Corps hymn during a Lance Cpl. Leadership and Ethics Seminar graduation ceremony hosted by Marine Aircraft Group 24, 1st Marine Aircraft Group, at Marine Corps Base Hawai'i, April 17, 2026. The seminar provided junior Marines with foundational leadership training, reinforced core values, and prepared them for increased responsibilities within the Marine Corps. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Anabelle Reed-O'Brien) [More Imagery](#)