



KUKA'ILIMOKU

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

IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

ARTEMIS II ASTRONAUT SUPPORT

LAUNAOLE 25 WINNERS

SENTRY ALOHA 26

FLOOD RECOVERY EFFORT

BELLOWS SUPER DRILL

Inside KŪKĀ'ILIMOKU

JUNE
2026

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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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- Q&A with new 154th Wing Commander** | Page 3
- Hawaii National Guard Aides Flood Recovery** | Page 8
- Sentry Aloha 26-1** | Page 10
- Hawaiian Raptors Win Weapons Load Comp** | Page 16
- FY25 Launaole Winners** | Page 18
- Bellows Super Drill** | Page 24
- Artemis II Astronaut Support** | Page 28
- Chief Promotions** | Page 32
- Congrats to the Cols.** | Page 33
- Leaving a Legacy - Retirements** | Page 34
- Civil Engineers and State Workers** | Page 35
- Chaplain's Corner** | Page 36
- The Resilient Airman** | Page 37

Q&A

With the 154th Wing
Commander



COL. SHANE NAGATANI



Leading Boldly

Q: What inspired you pursue a career in aviation and a life of military service?

A: My pursuit of a career in aviation and military service was shaped by family influence and a lifelong fascination with flight. It began in elementary school with a dream of becoming an astronaut, fueled by old Air Force magazines given to me by my uncle. During high school, my interest grew as I watched F-15s take off daily and gained my first exposure to the military through JROTC. As college approached, my father spoke fondly of how his own military service helped offset tuition, which motivated me to earn an Air Force ROTC scholarship. The defining moment came during my sophomore year when I was medically cleared for pilot training. That solidified my purpose: earning the opportunity to return to Hawaii and fly the very same jets I grew up watching.

Q: Your time in the Hawaii ANG has been a significant chapter. Could you share a specific memory since joining the HIANG that truly defines the spirit of this organization for you?

A: While it is difficult to single out just one moment from my time with the HIANG, the true spirit of this organization is defined not by a single event, but by its people. For me, that spirit is reflected in the families I have watched grow and evolve over the years. Our Guard 'Ohana is built on a deep sense of interconnectedness—a network of sisters, brothers, and cousins serving side by side. That bond is the foundation of our commitment to each other and our communities.

One of my greatest joys is watching my own family grow within this community with their aunts and uncles, building lifelong memories at squadron parties and family events they've attended. That enduring sense of 'Ohana is what makes this organization so special.



Q: With 'Ohana remaining a Wing priority—could you share a little bit about your own family?

A: My family is anchored by my beautiful wife Jessica who works fulltime as a home loan officer and volunteers her spare time between running kids to practices to support our military 'ohana. My two kids and too many dogs keep us very active and we spend time between sports fields, skateparks, gyms, and the beach. I also am thankful to have a close extended family with grandparents, aunts, and uncles that play an active role in our lives.

Q: Beyond your service, what's something you're passionate about that might surprise our Airmen?

A: I'm very passionate about teaching and coaching my lifetime hobbies, which include soccer, wakeboarding, kitesurfing, and surfing. While I wouldn't call myself an expert in any of them, I deeply value engaging with and giving back to our communities outside of the service. I've actually learned most of what I know by having to explain the 'how' and 'why' to others. Much of my own experience came through trial and error, but I also owe a lot to mentors and friends who actively shared their knowledge with me.

Q: Looking back at your career, is there a decision that ended up being pivotal in shaping the leader you are today?

A: I think what's shaped me most is observing decisions made by those around me, my mentors and my peers, and learning from them. As a young officer, I learned from great leaders and saw some of those senior leaders' decisions questioned – to the point I think some young officers are afraid to make decisions. I've tried to emulate those difficult decisions and provide commander's intent to our teams. I've also reminded myself

to step back and let my Group and Squadron Commander's innovatively come up with new solutions. By allowing our unit commanders to come up with innovative solutions and execute them, I believe we are instilling a positive mental attitude in our upcoming leaders and Airmen.

Q: What are the core values or principles that guide your leadership style and your decision-making process?

A: My leadership style is guided by three core principles. The first is Ke Ala Pono—the righteous path—a lesson I learned from my dad. It centers on having pride in yourself and others through Mālama (care), Kuleana (responsibility), and Hō'ihi (respect). By embedding care, responsibility, and mutual respect into our daily culture, we create an environment where both our mission and our people can thrive.

Second, I expect our leaders to **lead boldly**. This means operating decisively within the left and right limits of commander's intent, AFIs/AFMANs, and tech orders. In today's strategic climate, we must aggressively apply the lessons learned from real-world operations and exercises. We need to build robust plans that stand the test of execution, along with solid contingencies for contested and degraded environments.

My final principle is trust—trusting down to our teams and trusting up to our leadership. When we empower our people, I am continually amazed by the exceptional work this Wing delivers, even with minimal lead time. Conversely, I always try to remember that higher headquarters is looking at a broader picture, and my job is to support that vision. While my default is always to try and get to 'YES' on requests, true trust also means understanding that leadership requires making difficult, and sometimes unpopular, decisions for the greater good of the organization.

Q: Leadership is often forged in adversity. Could you walk us through a significant leadership challenge you've faced and what you learned about yourself and your team from that experience?

A: The most significant leadership challenge of my career is actually happening right now: supporting our currently deployed team. Stepping into Wing Command, I was quickly reminded that our priorities are often dictated by real-world operational demands.

The most difficult night of my career was watching families say their goodbyes, knowing I wasn't getting on the plane with the team heading downrange. I am learning every day how to better support both our deployed Airmen and the families holding down the home front. At the same time, this short-notice mobilization has fundamentally shifted my perspective. It proved that we must be ready *today*. We cannot put off IMR requirements until the next drill or let distractions sidetrack our focus. Seeing how incredibly well our 154th Wing team has responded to this challenge has reinvigorated my own commitment to everyday readiness.

Q: In an era of high-tempo operations, what is your vision for maintaining mission readiness while ensuring our Airmen don't burn out?

A: Maintaining readiness without burning out comes down to managing our pace and perspective. My best advice is to intentionally embrace the opportunities you have to slow down, laugh with your teammates, and savor time with your families – we have to maintain our perspective and truly appreciate our downtime.



At the same time, because most of us aren't currently hearing an 'Alarm Red' over the giant voice, we have a responsibility to use this time deliberately. We must take advantage of peacetime to prepare for when we are tested. Putting in the reps and sets during exercises and part-task trainers can be time-consuming but that rigorous preparation ensures that when it is time to send our Airmen out the door, we are fully ready and won't look back with any regrets."

Q: If you could share just one piece of advice with the Airmen of the 154th Wing, what would it be?

A: master your craft and approach every task with a positive attitude. When we have high-functioning, solutions-oriented Airmen, the balance between mission success and taking care of people becomes seamless. Rather than just identifying problems, I challenge our multi-capable Airmen to bring potential fixes to the table. By embracing challenges and celebrating the grit it takes to overcome them, we foster a mindset that will carry the 154th Wing to new heights.



HAWAII NATIONAL GUARD

NORTH SHORE FLOOD DEBRIS REMOVAL

Airmen of the Hawaii National Guard were activated following back-to-back Kona Low Storms in March 2026 that caused widespread flooding on Oahu's North Shore.

In one of the most hard hit communities along the Waialua River, Airmen have been working alongside residents and volunteers in cleaning mud removing debris and helping the community begin the long journey to recovery.



SENTRY ALOHA 26

Story by **SrA Roann Gatdula**

Photos by **SMSGT Mysti Bicoy, TSgt John Linzmeier and SrA Michael Swingnen**

The Hawaii Air National Guard hosted approximately 1,000 personnel and more than 40 aircraft from across the U.S. and Australia as part of this year's Sentry Aloha exercise, held Jan. 14-28 on Oahu.

Sentry Aloha is a recurring National Guard Bureau exercise hosted by the Hawaii ANG's 154th Wing. It provides tailored, cost-effective, and realistic combat training for the Air National Guard, U.S. Air Force,

and other Department of Defense services, ensuring warfighters possess the skills necessary for both homeland defense and overseas combat.

This iteration of Sentry Aloha brings together more than 40 aircraft to practice core aerial combat capabilities and strengthen the total-force integration between active-duty, Guard, and international partner units.



The following units and aircraft participated in Sentry Aloha:

- 154th Wing (Hawaii Air National Guard): F-22 Raptor and KC-135 Stratotanker
- 115th Fighter Wing (Wisconsin Air National Guard): F-35A Lightning II
- 128th Air Refueling Wing (Wisconsin Air National Guard): KC-135 Stratotanker
- 159th Fighter Wing (Louisiana Air National Guard): F-15C Eagle
- 155th Air Refueling Wing (Nebraska Air National Guard): KC-135 Stratotanker
- 153rd Airlift Wing (Wyoming Air National Guard): C-130H Hercules
- 3rd Wing (Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska): E-3 Sentry
- 552nd Air Control Wing (Tinker Air Force Base, Okla.): E-3 Sentry
- Airborne Tactical Advantage Company (Hawaii): MK-58 Hawker Hunter
- Royal Australian Air Force: Support personnel

Visiting units integrated with the 199th and 19th Fighter Squadrons' Hickam-based "Hawaiian Raptors" for high-intensity simulated combat.

For many visiting Airmen, the unique geography of the Hawaiian Islands provided challenges that can't be replicated on the continental U.S.

"Operating in a tropical climate, vice, where we operate in Wisconsin, when the high tomorrow is going to be negative eight, it's a very different feeling for how we go to fight a lot of other factors that we don't normally deal with, such as the constant potential for rain showers just to pop up," said Capt. Nathan Moll, 115th Fighter Wing F-35 pilot.

"Fighting and executing our tactics over water, it's not something you can do everywhere, so it's certainly a valuable training exercise for us; we are 100 percent practicing how we play."

During the exercise, units utilized Marine Corps Base Hawaii at Kaneohe Bay as a simulated 'spoke' location. This forced fifth-generation aircraft to operate away from their primary infrastructure at Hickam. This environment tested their ability to maintain high-tempo operations and advanced data-sharing in a decentralized setting, ensuring these stealth platforms remain lethal even when traditional hubs are targeted.

The exercise required significant logistical coordination, with the Sentry Aloha team orchestrating the movement of more than 1,000 personnel and 124 short tons of cargo within a three-day period.

"Coming over the Pacific, flying long distances, bringing all the cargo, the logistics and how everything flows is a big learning curve for them," said Senior Master Sgt. Brian Kealoha, Sentry Aloha maintenance planner. "Everything has to fly. Understanding how all those pieces work—transitioning aircraft, ensuring tanker support, and refueling—is a massive movement for a fighter unit traveling long distances."

This level of immersion ensures that members are not just trained, but thoroughly prepared to respond to any conflict when called upon, particularly when integrating with partnered units as a unified team.





HOME TEAM HEROES:

HAWAIIAN RAPTORS WEAPONS TEAM WINS SENTRY ALOHA 26-1 WEAPONS LOAD COMPETITION

Photos and Story by SrA Roann Gatlula



The Hawaiian Raptors weapons load crew secured a first-place finish during a multi-airframe loading competition at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Jan. 23.

The competition was part of the final events of exercise Sentry Aloha 26-1, a recurring National Guard Bureau fighter exercise hosted by the Hawaii ANG's 154th Wing. The crews were evaluated on speed, safety and technical proficiency across three separate airframes: the locally-based F-22 Raptor, and visiting F-15 Eagle and F-35 Lightning.

"Competing against other crews in these competitions has allowed us to maintain a calm and competitive attitude," said Tech. Sgt. Steve Tanaleon, 154th Aircraft Maintenance

Squadron Weapons Standardized Load crew chief. "As members of Standardized Load Crews, we have utmost confidence in our abilities to load any time of the day or place."

Representing a total-force partnership between the 154th and 15th Aircraft Maintenance Squadrons (AMXS), the Hawaiian Raptors went head-to-head against the 159th Fighter Wing from the Louisiana Air National Guard, and Wisconsin Air National Guard's 115th Fighter Wing in a battle of speed, precision, and technical mastery. The home team completed the air-to-air load out in eight minutes and 20 seconds.

Tanaleon's crew consisted of Tech. Sgt. Bradley Vioria of the 154th AMXS and Staff Sgt. Matthew Guyer of the 15th AMXS. The blend of Guard and active-duty Airmen highlights the collaborative strength required to maintain the Hawaiian Raptors' mission.

"There's a strong sense of pride in representing one's unit, and the bragging rights that come with winning are a significant motivator," said Tanaleon. "My crew has previously competed in various weapons load competitions throughout our careers, but this was our first load competition loading together as a crew."



Weapons load competitions are typically held on a quarterly and annual basis to sharpen readiness and strengthen morale. Facing off against other top-performing crews creates a high-pressure environment that showcases the skill, hard work and determination of the Airmen involved.

The crews compete with high expectations, focusing on several key areas including: speed, accuracy, and adherence to safety protocols. Additionally, the competition includes a written test on safety and general weapons loading knowledge, as well as a toolbox inspection.

Competitions are designed to simulate the urgency of real-world combat operations. By testing the crews' ability to safely and efficiently load munitions on fighter aircraft in a timed environment, the competition directly showcases their readiness for real-world taskings.

This intensity helps to identify areas for improvement and further hone the crew's skills.

While rivals in the moment, the visiting units celebrated the Hawaii team's victory with a Koa wood surfboard trophy commemorating their achievement as one of the final events of this year's iteration of Sentry Aloha.

"Teamwork is the cornerstone of a successful weapons load crew," Tanaleon said. "The competition fosters teamwork, communication, and pride, ensuring Airmen are not only technically skilled but also mentally prepared to perform under pressure," said Tanaleon. "Being able to display our skills in front of a crowd and prove to everyone here and ourselves that we're good at our jobs, that just feels good."

The Hawaiian Raptors faced off against crews from the 159th and 115th Fighter Wings



LAUNA'OLE AWARDS CEREMONY HONORS OUTSTANDING AIRMEN

The HIANG held its annual Launa'ole Awards Ceremony to recognize its top-performing Airmen for the year of 2025 at the Hickam Theater Hollister Auditorium. This event celebrated the outstanding achievements of the organization's full-time and drill-status guardsmen (DSG) who went above and beyond in their duties and contributions to the HIANG mission.

Launa'ole in the Hawaiian language means "without comparison," embodying the spirit of excellence that the HIANG aims to foster in its Airmen. By recognizing the top performers, the organization acknowledges their exceptional work and encourages others to strive for excellence as well.

Leaders from all units of the HIANG gathered to celebrate the achievements of the top performers and to recognize each for their outstanding contributions. The ceremony was a way to show appreciation for the hard work and dedication of these Airmen, who are the backbone of the HIANG.

The significance of the Launa'ole Awards goes beyond mere recognition; it highlights the profound impact these individuals and competing nominees have had on their community and the nation's wartime readiness. The recipients of these awards have demonstrated exceptional leadership, innovation, and commitment, contributing to the safety and security of the nation and

fostering a stronger, more resilient community.

During the ceremony, Airmen were recognized in two categories: the full-time category and the DSG category. The full-time category recognized the top performers who were employed by the HIANG on a full-time basis, while the DSG category recognized the top performers who were part-time Guardsmen.

In addition to the individual awards, the 154th Mission Support Group won the Kaleo Nui Award for a second year in a row for delivering a high-spirited music video that incorporated vocal talent, unique choreography, and dance moves from all levels of the MSG, including that of its commander, Col. Glen Hayase. This award is presented to a unit or individual who demonstrates exceptional creativity and innovation in their work.

The ceremony is a testament to the HIANG's commitment to fostering a culture of excellence and encouraging its Airmen to push themselves to be the best they can be. By recognizing their achievements, the HIANG is showing its appreciation for the Airmen who make its mission possible. The Launa'ole Awards serve as an inspiration, motivating all members to continue striving for greatness and ensuring the continued success and readiness of the HIANG and the community it serves.





**OUTSTANDING UNIT OF THE YEAR
154TH COMMUNICATIONS SQUADRON**



**WINNING TEAM OF THE YEAR
298TH AIR DEFENSE GROUP
AGILE OPERATIONS TEAM**



**SERVICE TEAM OF THE YEAR
298TH AIR DEFENSE GROUP
COMMUNITY OUTREACH TEAM**



**KALEO NUI AWARD
154TH MISSION SUPPORT GROUP**



**AIRMAN OF THE YEAR
FULL TIME**
**SRA ISABELLA
HARRIS**
154TH COMMUNICATIONS
SQUADRON



**AIRMAN OF THE YEAR
PART TIME**
**SRA JEREMY
MCDONALD**
109TH ELECTROMAGNETIC
WARFARE SQUADRON



**NCO OF THE YEAR
FULL TIME**
**SSGT BREEZE
AGPAOA**
201ST COMBAT OPERATIONS
SQUADRON



**NCO OF THE YEAR
PART TIME**
**TSGT JOCELYN
MORALES-ONZA**
298TH AIR
DEFENSE GROUP



**SNCO OF THE YEAR
FULL TIME**
**MSGT WILLIAM
MORGAN**
204TH AIRLIFT
SQUADRON



**SNCO OF THE YEAR
PART TIME**
**MSGT DEREK
LEE**
298TH SUPPORT
SQUADRON



**CGO OF THE YEAR
FULL TIME**
**CAPT DARRYEN
RHODES**
201ST AIR MOBILITY
OPERATIONS SQUADRON



**CGO OF THE YEAR
PART TIME**
**CAPT MEGHAN-TOMISTA
COSGRIFF-HERNANDEZ**
154TH AIRCRAFT
MAINTENANCE SQUADRON



**FGO OF THE YEAR
FULL TIME**
**MAJ SY
CULLEN**
169TH AIR DEFENSE
SQUADRON



**FGO OF THE YEAR
PART TIME**
**MAJ ALBERT
OBIER**
298TH SUPPORT
SQUADRON



**FIRST SERGEANT
OF THE YEAR**
**MSGT APRIL
SCOTT**
154TH MISSION SUPPORT
GROUP



**KEY SUPPORT LIASON
OF THE YEAR**
**SHIRLENE
CARDENAS**

BELLOWS SUPER DRILL:

ENGINEERS AND OPERATORS SIMULATE FORWARD BASE SURVIVAL

Photos and Story by A1C Lydia Tristan

297TH COMBAT AIRFIELD OPERATION SQUADRON AIRMEN CONDUCTING A SUPER DRILL OUT AT BELLOWS AIR FORCE BASE.

The 154th Civil Engineer Squadron (154th CES) and the 297th Combat Airfield Operations Squadron (297th CAOS) teamed up for a Joint Field Training Exercise at Bellows Air Force Station (AFS) April 9-12.

Dubbed the Bellows AFS Super Drill, the training tested and validated the unit's ability to deploy, establish independent operations, and sustain the mission. Personnel sharpened critical wartime skills by building a fully self-sustaining encampment that simulated a forward operating base.

"During this exercise, airmen engaged in a variety of hands-on activities designed to simulate a real-world, contested deployment," said Senior Master Sgt. George Demesillo, 297th Combat Airfield Operations Squadron logistics planner.

"These activities are structured to test

both individual skills and unit cohesion under pressure."

The FTX pushed the 154th CES into a high-tempo environment where skill sets were tested against simulated threats and stormy tropical weather. Personnel maintained a rigorous base defense posture against ground and air assaults, while inside Unit Control Centers, leadership navigated the complexities of Command and Control through numerous drills including operating with compromised communication channels.

"The ability to operate in contested, degraded, and operationally limited environments are direct responses to the changing nature of modern warfare," said Demesillo.



U.S. AIR FORCE MASTER SGT. KEONI GARCIA, 297TH COMBAT AIR OPERATIONS SQUADRON, AIRFIELD SYSTEMS TECHNICIAN, BUILDS DEPLOYABLE INSTRUMENT LANDING SYSTEM (D-ILS) GLIDESLOPE ANTENNA AT BELLOWS AIR FORCE STATION, HAWAII, APRIL 9, 2026. SETTING UP THE D-ILS WAS USED TO DEVELOP AND IMPROVE ESSENTIAL SURVIVAL AND OPERATIONAL SKILLS OF AIRMEN IN AN EXPEDITIONARY ENVIRONMENT.



The training took a critical turn when a simulated medical evacuation of the commander forced a seamless transfer of airfield command to the 154th CES testing the unit's leadership depth under duress. On the flight line, teams practiced Tactical Combat Casualty Care and executed an Airfield Damage Repair mission following a downed-helicopter scenario, a massive undertaking that saw engineers operating heavy machinery and cutting concrete to restore the runway.

Even amidst simulated chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats that required full protective gear, the focus remained on

operational continuity, with robust communication links and accountability checks ensuring that every moving part of the mission remained synchronized.

The event served as a critical milestone in the wing's readiness cycle, marking the first of four major operations that comprise Ho'oiikaika, the Hawaii Air National Guard's biannual Combat Readiness Exercise. Meaning "to strengthen and encourage," Ho'oiikaika is designed to move beyond basic proficiency, bridging the gap between individual technical skills and the collective power required to project air power globally.

This commitment to readiness

was echoed by U.S. Air Force Col. Shane H. Nagatani, 154th Wing commander.

"The strength of our Wing resides in us – the individual members of the Hawaii Air National Guard," Nagatani said. "I am excited to see us demonstrate the skills and abilities we employ each day in service to our State, defense of our country, and the projection of air power around the globe."

Ultimately, that strength is defined by a refusal to let external conditions dictate the mission. As the island braced for heavy storms and potential flooding during the exercise, the priority at Bellows never wavered.

When asked if the training would be canceled or delayed due to the weather, Demsillo offered a confident laugh, his response making the unit's resolve clear before he even spoke.

"Yes," he said. "We're a combat unit."

TOP RIGHT: U.S. AIR FORCE STAFF SGT. JOHN CASISON 297TH COMBAT AIR OPERATIONS SQUADRON, RADAR, AIRFIELD & WEATHER SYSTEMS TECHNICIAN, ERECTS GROUND-TO-AIR RADIO FREQUENCY ANTENNA AT BELLOWS AIR FORCE STATION, HAWAII, APRIL 9, 2026. PRACTICING THESE SKILLS HELPED THE AIRMEN DEMONSTRATE THEIR ABILITY TO SUPPORT DISPERSED OPERATIONAL SITES AND MAINTAIN OPERATIONAL READINESS.

BOTTOM RIGHT: U.S. AIR FORCE AIRMEN FROM THE 297TH COMBAT OPERATIONS SQUADRON, STAGED FOR SUPER DRILLS AT BELLOWS AIR FORCE STATION, HAWAII, APRIL 9, 2026. THESE SUPER DRILLS DURING THE FIRST OPERATION OF HO'OIKAIKA HELPED IMPROVE INTEROPERABILITY AND COLLABORATION WITH JOINT AND COALITION FORCES.

BOTTOM PHOTO: 297TH COMBAT AIR OPERATIONS AIRMEN GATHER DURING A TRAINING BRIEF.



HIANG SUPPORTS NASA ARTEMIS II MISSION

Story by **SrA Roann Gatlula** Photos by **TSgt John Linzmeier and SrA Aden Brown**

The Hawaii Air National Guard (HIANG) maintained lifesaving rescue capabilities to NASA's space crews in the Artemis II mission, ready at a moments notice at both Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH), Hawaii and Joint Base Charleston (JBC), South Carolina, April 1-10.

Aircrews from the 204th Airlift Squadron (204th AS), alongside maintenance personnel from the 154th Maintenance Group (154th MXG), prepared C-17 Globemaster III jets, loading them with rescue craft and survival equipment, ensuring the aircraft and crews were ready to execute a rapid-response contingency search and rescue mission if NASA called upon them.

"In the event something goes wrong with the landing trajectory, we have the capability to launch and rescue the astronauts when the capsule lands in the water," said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Skip Saito, 204th Airlift Squadron commander. "We've been training for years for this and it feels great to be able to support."

The Artemis II is NASA's first crewed mission of the Artemis program, designed as a 10-day test flight orbiting the Moon to validate systems for deep space exploration. Launching four astronauts aboard the Orion spacecraft, it is the first crewed lunar mission in over 50 years, paving the way for future lunar surface landings.

During the initial launch of the Orion spacecraft on April 1, C-17s and crews, along with teams of specially trained Air Force Pararescuemen (PJs) - elite special operations forces tasked with rescuing, treating, and recovering personnel in hostile or restricted environments - maintained a constant alert posture ready for immediate dispatch from JBPHH and JBC.

Upon the spacecraft's reentry to Earth on April 10, the 204th AS received NASA's alert activation notice and took off from JBPHH, allowing for a head start in case search and rescue in the vast Pacific Ocean be required.

At JBC, crews remained vigilant for immediate takeoff should an off-nominal landing take place in the Atlantic.

Aircrews and PJs weren't the only key players, the mission required a total team effort. Logistics and air transportation Airmen played a critical role, inspecting and rigging several tons of rescue equipment for airdrop.

"It's a huge team effort, our loadmasters are in charge of all the cargo and they go hand-in-hand with the pararescue guardian angel team," said Saito. "But the loggie (logistics) and the port dawgs (Air Transportation Specialists) played a huge role helping to ensure we were not only ready to go, but ready to go safely."





Training for the mission had been years in the making. The HIANG built a strong working relationship through joint exercises with pararescue teams from the California and Alaska Air National Guard, ensuring seamless integration when it matters most.

Ultimately, the Orion spacecraft landed safely in the Pacific, and contingency search and rescue was not required. However, if needed, aircrews would have flown to the capsule's last known location and conducted coordinated search patterns, using tools like illumination flares during nighttime operations to help visually locate the astronauts.

Once the capsule was found, loadmasters would deploy the pararescue team and their equipment via airdrop, initiating recovery operations and providing immediate medical aid.

“We work hand-in-hand with the guardian angel teams - the pararescue men,” Saito said. “Intergration is key as we employ a mixture of Guard, Reserve, and active duty, and whoever is on alert at the time.”

Since 1959, the Department of War has collaborated with NASA to support human space flight support operations. The Hawaii Air National Guard's support for the NASA mission is

a continuation of a decades-long partnership and continues to contribute to the future success of human spaceflight, U.S. national space policies and programs, and international cooperation in space.





HAIL TO THE CHIEFS

HIANG WELCOMES INCOMING CHIEFS

CONGRATS TO OUR COLONELS

A warm Aloha to our incoming Chiefs!



CMSGT MICHAEL CHO, 169TH ADS



COL. ELIZABETH EVANS, 154TH MXG



COL. BRANDEN "BRANDEE" TAYLOR, 201ST AMOS



CMSGT MANDY MAHUKA, 154TH FSS



CMSGT XAVIER CADAY, 154TH AMXS

Hōomaika'i (Congratulations) to our incoming Colonels on their recent promotions!

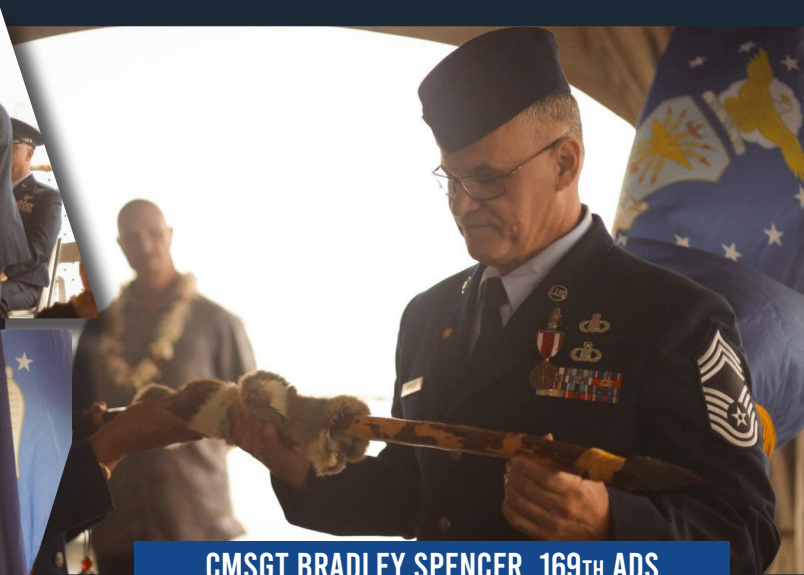
We're excited to be under your leadership.



LEAVING A LEGACY

MAHALO FOR YOUR SERVICE

A Hui Hou and Congratulations to our outgoing leaders who inspired us. Cheers to the next chapter!



CMSGT BRADLEY SPENCER, 169TH ADS



CMSGT WENDALL "WIBA" VILLANUEVA, 154TH MXS



LT. COL. BJ ITOMAN, 204TH AS



MAHALO TO OUR STATE WORKERS

Hawaii Air National Guard commander Brig. Gen. Phillip Mallory, stopped by the 154th Civil Engineering Squadron to personally thank our state workers for keeping the Wing running, especially in light of recent storms and flooding.

Civil Engineering employees, Will Palting and Rylan Roland, received Hawaii Air National Guard coins for their continuous hard work!

Our historical buildings stay standing and our teams stay working because of these essential professionals. Mahalo to our outstanding civilian team that keeps us running!



Chaplains Corner

By Capt. Marion Logan

May 7 is designated The National Day of Prayer. This day is special to people of faith because prayer is celebrated and practiced collectively throughout our nation in many faiths, contexts, and customs. It is an exposé of diverse practice with some praying quietly and contemplatively, others praying loudly and passionately—some stand, some sit, some lay prostrate, some pray structured prayers and others pray extemporaneously. It is diverse, multi-faceted, and experiential.

In my faith, prayer incorporates many dimensions—personal and relational, passionate and resting, asking and receiving, praising and pleading, hoping and grieving, and holding-on or releasing. Prayer is practiced with the belief that you are not alone, God is with you, and that you are reaching beyond human senses. I believe that I am looking to a power that is greater—to a source that can see beyond, who can lead me, guide me, protect me, and give wisdom.

Prayer has helped me during dark times, allowed space to gain perspective,

given me ability to forgive, the humility to seek forgiveness, the courage to change, the steadfastness to remain, and the strength to press forward.

Prayer from others has helped me when I didn't have the words, patience, or strength. My mom prayed for me when I felt alone as a kid. Pastors prayed for me when I experienced a tragedy in high school. Brothers and sisters in the faith prayed for me when I lost my dad. My wife has prayed for me during many difficult times.

Now, I have the opportunity to pray. I pray for my wife, my boys, my mom, my brothers and sisters in faith. I pray for our political leaders, military commanders, community leaders, family, and friends.

I want to leave with this thought... What if we all prayed more? What kind of difference would that make? How more empowered, strengthened, wise, humble, and loving would we all be?

Let's celebrate National Day of Prayer.

How?

By praying!

Here is a prayer in my faith tradition found in the Bible:

Psalm 25:4-5a

" Make me know Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me..."

Chaplain Logan



When **STRESS** Speaks: Learning to Listen, Not React

By Clara Balha, LCSW

Stress isn't the enemy; it's a signal. At its core, stress is the body's way of keeping you safe. It sharpens focus and prepares you to act. The feeling you get before a tough conversation is normal, adaptive stress that helps you move forward. Stress becomes unhelpful when it stops guiding you and starts controlling you. For example, when it's constant, overwhelming, and begins shaping how you think, feel, and respond. Instead of helping you assess risk, it convinces you that everything is a threat.

So how do we tell the difference?

Think of the hand model of the brain described by Dr. Daniel Siegel, a clinical professor of psychiatry at UCLA School of Medicine. Make a fist, your thumb is your emotional brain, and your fingers are your thinking brain. When your hand is closed, everything is working together. You're calm, thinking clearly, and responding with intention. When stress takes over, your fingers lift and your "lid flips." Your thinking brain goes offline, and your emotional brain drives. That's when reactions feel fast, intense, and harder to control.

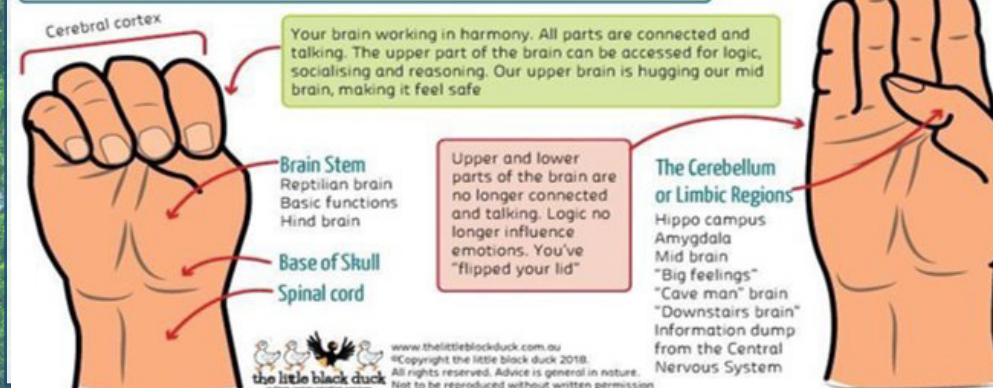
The goal is to notice when your lid flips and bring it back down. Pause and check in: Am I in control or am I reacting? You might notice signs like a racing heart, irritability, or wanting to act quickly these are cues you "flip your lid". From there, small resets can help bring you back such as slowing your breathing (in for 4, out for 8). If you can reflect, slow down, and chosen your response, you're in control. If everything feels urgent, intense, and reactive, you may need more time to reset.

Over time, this is how resilience is built, not by removing stress, but by learning how to work with it. And when it feels harder to get back to that place, don't hesitate to reach out for support. The Malama Mission Team is here for you. Please scan the QR code to access the full resource list.

The Hand Model of the Brain

What happens when we "flip our lid"

When our brain is working efficiently both the upper and mid brain are communicating effectively. Information comes in and is processed logically. Sometimes too much information is coming in for the Upper brain to process and it disconnects. We "flip our lid" and can no longer access the functions provided by the upper brain





154TH WING EMBLEM

A Hawaiian idol with eyes, mouth, and malo, holding to dexter a Hawaiian kahili standard with a wooden shaft, crested with feathers in a cylindrical shape at the top and in sinister a Hawaiian wooden spear, all within an orle.

Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force Operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The Shield symbolizes defense. The colors are derived from the colors used for the feathers caps and helmets traditionally worn by royalty in ancient Hawaii.

The stylized idol was used by the ancient Hawaiian kings and chiefs as visual symbols of personal gods. The idol has been emblematic with the Hawaii Air National Guard since its post-war formation.

The design is symbolic of fearlessness, valor, strength in the heat of battle and readiness for combat.

The spear is symbolic of battle. The kahili represents authority and was used to identify the ranks of kings and chiefs.

The emblem was approved on 26 October 1961