



KUKA'ILIMOKU

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

FIGHTERS UNITE FOR SENTRY ALOHA 24-2



ALSO IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

- 297 ATCS JOINS SOUTHERN STRIKE
- 154 CES HOLDS PACIFIC WARRIORZ
- 2023 LAUNA OLE AWARDS

Inside KŪKĀ‘ILIMOKU

JULY
2024

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- 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.
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Diving Deeper | Page 4

First Sentry Luau Exercise | Page 6

Southern Strike | Page 8

Pacific Warriorz | Page 10

Launa Ole Awards | Page 12

154th SFS Receives National Award | Page 16

154th FSS Sweeps National Awards | Page 18

Fighters Integrate for Sentry Aloha 24-2 | Page 20

Chaplains Corner | Page 24

Lessons from Anna Hall | Page 25

Partnerships Fostered with Philippine Air Force | Page 26

A message from the 154th Wing Commander

Aloha Team,

2024 is flying by and we are already halfway through the year! Please take a moment to reflect on all that you have and are continuing to accomplish. AT weeks, unit level exercises, Sentry Aloha, and of course our deployed Airmen you are all advancing our National Defense Strategy and combatant commander's objectives. Your dedication, resilience and hard work have driven our success, and I am incredibly proud of each and every one of you and to be a part of your team!

We ask a lot of our service members—each of you rises to the challenge every day. However, amidst all our responsibilities, it's vital to remember that we must be able to defend ourselves before we can effectively defend others. Supporting one another and asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. Just as we wouldn't hesitate to seek medical help for a physical injury, we must be equally proactive in addressing our mental health.

Each of us plays a crucial role in maintaining the wellness of our community. It's about creating a culture where seeking help is always encouraged. While initiating conversations to check in on one another and ourselves may be uncomfortable, these discussions are essential for our collective well-being. By being vigilant and supportive, we can ensure no one is ever left behind.

Remember, each and every member of our Ohana is an indispensable part of our team and it all starts with you. Let's commit to maintaining both our physical and mental well-being with the same dedication and courage we bring to our duties.

Stay strong, stay connected, and always remember—you are not alone. Fly, Fight, Win!

-Buddha



Brig. Gen. Phillip L. Mallory
154th Wing Commander



DIVING DEEPER: HAWAII MAINTENANCE OFFICER SHARPENS, TIP OF THE SPEAR, MENTALITY IN MILITARY AND SPEARFISHING

By Tech. Sgt. Nicholas Brown

1st Lt. Virginia Ying immersed herself in the art of spearfishing upon her relocation to Hawaii 11 years ago.

"I started spearfishing on my second day here, and I soon realized that there weren't many women involved in the sport. It felt like less than five percent, but I persisted because of the thrill and challenge," said Ying. "Regardless of your diving experience, you can always push yourself to dive deeper or target different species; it's a continuous personal challenge."

In 2021, Ying decided to turn her passion into her profession to address the lack of Asian American female-owned representation in the industry.

"The spearfishing community is predominantly male, so I aim to cater to females and families," she said.

She has since become an advocate for promoting safe spearfishing practices and environmental stewardship. Sustainability holds paramount importance within Hawaii's spearfishing community.

Ying said that spearfishers frequently come across invasive species that cause harm to the ecosystem and, through their responsible actions, can help manage these threats. This aspect of spearfishing plays a crucial role in protecting Hawaii's environment by offering a means to control invasive species that are negatively impacting the ocean.

Ying showcased her prowess at the National Freshwater Spearfishing Tournament held at Lake

Powell, Utah, where she secured second place with her team.

"Through spearfishing, I've learned to challenge myself beyond perceived limitations," said Ying. "Initially, I never imagined diving to the depths others could achieve."

Being a second-generation Asian American means Ying had the honor of being raised with the values of her Taiwanese heritage from her parents, as well as reaping the benefits of opportunities that being an American has given her.

"Having both worlds collide has created a melting pot of cultures and experiences that shaped me to be an open-minded, opportunistic, and passionate person," Ying said. "To me, being Asian American means to be hard-working, having high expectations, and thriving on ambition that makes me resilient and proud to be Asian and American."

Ying has demonstrated resilience both in spearfishing and her military career, serving as a maintenance officer for three distinct airframes and contributing to emergency operations at the mayor's office following the Maui wildfires, reporting to the Adjutant General.

"Adaptability is crucial in spearfishing, as conditions are ever-changing," said Ying. "This trait has proven invaluable in my military journey, adapting to new airframes and responding to crises in Maui."

Across air, land, and sea, Ying embraces challenges, pushing herself to new heights.



TROPICAL DOGFIGHT: F-15 VS F-22 IN 1ST SENTRY LUAU EXERCISE

By Staff Sgt Emily Copeland

Iconic fourth-generation F-15 Eagles squared off against cutting-edge fifth-generation F-22 Raptors throughout the month of March during the first iteration of Sentry Luau off the shores of Hawaii.

The exercise, a blend of seasoned technology and next-gen innovation, showcased the evolution of air combat tactics and the enduring relevance of both fighter jets set against the backdrop of the Koʻolau mountain range on the island of Oahu.

Approximately 90 Airmen from the 173rd Fighter Wing, based out of Kingsley Field in Klamath Falls, Ore., took to the skies with HIANG Guardsmen from the 199th Fighter Squadron and their active duty counterparts from the 19th Fighter Squadron to play 'Red Air' and 'Blue Air.' This friendly and adversarial play allows the jets to hone their skills while flying with other airframes that are not stationed alongside the Hawaiian Raptors.

The unique location of Hawaii offers an ideal setting for military training in the Pacific area of responsibility.

It presents ample airspace and favorable weather conditions to maximize their training experience.

Similar to the more well-known exercise, Sentry Aloha, Sentry Luau was created specifically to test the capabilities of the F-22 Raptors against the grandfather of fighter jets, the F-15, within the Pacific Air Force domain.

"The integration of fourth and fifth generation fighter aircraft is key to expanding the Air Force's capabilities in real world situations and to be prepared to fight against any given aircraft," said Maj. Jacoby McCoy, 173rd FW Sentry Luau project officer. "The F-15s were able to provide robust red air threat replication that they are unable to produce organically from within their squadron."



He went on to add that the F-15s delivered invaluable basic fighter maneuver training replicating "high off boresight heat threat," meaning threats that are at a long distance and out of direct visual range.

During Sentry Luau, the F-15s were able to complete more than 100 flying hours and 68 sorties, without any major maintenance issues during the exercise.



"The professionalism and capabilities of the Airmen working in maintenance led to a 100% flight generation success rate during the exercise," said 1st Lt. Bryce Balin, 173rd FW maintenance officer in charge. "To those who don't know, this is a very impressive feat when working with older aircraft, and in addition to the line success, the maintainers were able to help exceed the amount of scheduled familiarization flights that occurred in Hawaii."

Alongside the training flights, approximately 20 Airmen also had the opportunity to participate in familiarization flights in the backseat of the F-15 Eagles. This experience allowed Airmen who performed excellent work throughout the year to experience firsthand the culmination of their efforts in the flight of a lifetime over the turquoise waters of the Hawaiian Islands.

"I am particularly proud of all of the Airmen who stepped in to not only complete their own jobs, but also to fill in and work together for other career fields that needed assistance," said Balin. "This may be the one of the few exercises the Kingsley F-15s have left to participate in, and this trip has been a true testament to our wing's capabilities that

no matter what aircraft we fly we are getting the job done."

McCoy was quick to applaud the team effort that went into accomplishing Sentry Luau.

"This exercise took the work and experience of all different types of careers, from finance, planning, aircrew flight equipment, maintenance, and flight operations," he said. "Logistically, the work involved to support a large temporary duty exercise takes an incredible amount of home station planning, as well as coordination with the gaining unit. For the two-week TDY, Kingsley Airmen worked to get the planes off the ground and into the fight without delay."



Photos by Tech. Sgt John Linzmeier

297TH ATCS SUPPORTS JOINT COMBAT EXERCISE IN MISSISSIPPI

By **2nd Lt Harrison Matheny**



Members of the 297th Air Traffic Control Squadron from the Hawaii Air National Guard played a crucial role during Southern Strike 2024-1, a joint combat exercise held at Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center, Mississippi, from March 4-15.

The squadron, part of a contingent of approximately 425 military personnel from across the United States, engaged in intensive training activities. These included preparing for contingency response operations, aeromedical evacuation, security forces airfield protection, specialized fueling operations, and rotary aviation medevac and airlift.

“Contingency response is a function of the Agile Combat Employment concept that Southern Strike got after last year,” said U.S. Air Force Col. Albert Germany, exercise deputy director. “CR teams are designed to rapidly deploy personnel to quickly establish and expand air bases and coordinate air operations.”

The ability to quickly open an airfield from scratch for combat use in an austere environment will be a force multiplier if the United States faces great power conflict in the Indo-Pacific or European theaters.

A contingency response team includes personnel from all career fields required to set up and sustain combat airpower and domestic operations.

The annual exercise provides valuable training scenarios to prepare fighters for various threats. The 297th ATCS members spent the first week of Southern Strike 2024-1 training at Gulfport CRTC and spent the second week at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center in a simulated hostile environment.

“We are training to rapidly pack up, airlift, and set up mobile air traffic control and landing systems equipment. We temporarily relocated 37 Air National Guard personnel from Hawaii to Mississippi to operate, maintain, and sustain that equipment,” said Capt. Eric Korpi, director of operations of the 297th ATCS. “Gulfport CRTC and Camp Shelby provided a one stop shop for the type of services, logistical support, expertise, and numerous training locations we need to simulate a real-world deployment setting that we might encounter during conflict with a near-peer or peer competitor.”

Aeromedical evacuation operations training was another core training set at Southern Strike 2024-1.

“AE is the feel-good story of the Air Force. We can go to the point of injury in the new Agile Combat Environment as well as provide patient movement in well-established theaters already in existence,” said Senior Master Sgt. Robert Buresh of the 109th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, Minnesota Air National Guard. “Coming to Southern Strike allows us to polish our ground and air operations to provide the best care for our fellow service members. Plus, coming to Mississippi during the winter is always welcome for us, too!”

The 109th AES and 146th AES, California Air National Guard, will use their Southern Strike 2024-1 training to provide casualty care and expedited medical airlift in combat environments, saving the lives of forward-deployed Americans, allies and partners.

Gulfport CRTC can accommodate up to 100 fighters and approximately 75 larger airlift and refueling aircraft. Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center, 60 miles north of Gulfport, is the largest state-owned mobilization and training site in the United States.

“The Southern Strike exercise allows our joint force from across the U.S. to deploy to the CRTC, Camp Shelby and other Mississippi training sites and operate in an expeditionary austere setting,” said U.S. Army Col. Christopher Cooksey, exercise director of Southern Strike 2024. “From start to finish, this entire exercise is preparing our Airmen and Soldiers for future deployments throughout the worldwide operating environment.”

EXERCISE PACIFIC WARRIORZ

BUILDS MUTI-CAPABLE READINESS

By Staff Sgt Robert Cabuco

Airmen from the 154th Civil Engineer Squadron performed Rapid Airfield Damage Recovery training at Bellows Air Force Station April 7, during exercise Pacific Warriorz 2024.

The primary objective of the exercise was to conduct movement, beddown and base recovery efforts after a simulated airfield attack in order to improve readiness and strengthen partnerships within the unit and additional participants from the U.S. Air Force's active and reserve components.

This year, the exercise evolved to incorporate and enhance the Multi-Capable Airmen concept, enabling participants to develop skills beyond their usual professional scope and apply new competencies across various roles.

"We are trying to improve on our mindset to develop multi-capable Airmen by incorporating every participant's [Air Force Specialty Code, or career field]," said Maj. Raymon LaFleur, Chief Executive Officer of the 154th Civil Engineer Squadron and Exercise Director for Pacific Warriorz. "This gives everyone a taste of the various roles each AFSC plays in the exercise."

During the simulated airfield attack, Airmen were provided a scenario where a 'suspicious chemical' was released into the battlefield. The Emergency Management team, comprised of guardsmen from the 154th CES, reservists from the 624th Regional Support Group, and active duty service members from the 647th Force Support Squadron, were tested on their ability to adapt to the scenario.

"We had pre-established power routes, when suspicious chemicals were released," said Senior Airman Angelblayze Padilla, an emergency management planner from the 154th CES. "We pivoted and performed runner routes to assess what was out there and report back to leadership. The Airmen were directed to don various degrees of Mission Oriented Protective Posture gear in response to the chemical release."



The exercise aims to bolster the partnerships between the guardsmen, reservists and active duty whose missions support the same recovery efforts in the airfield. The guardsmen and reservists benefited from the interaction with active duty.

"Drill is often spent catching up with administrative readiness requirements, so we don't practice as often as our active duty counterparts with the equipment required to perform the mission," said Padilla. "It was really nice because they came into the exercise with a lot of experience. They gave us reminders and tips on how to perform and how the equipment works. They had an active-duty Airman who was on top of things all the time. It was a good thing they were with us."

After the simulated attack, the increased involvement and number of trained Airmen during the surge of recovery efforts exponentially

increases the rate of success and reduces the time it will take to return friendly aircraft into the fight.

The Explosive Ordnance Disposal team from the 154th CES also participated in the exercise. They play a critical role in the RADR mission as they are responsible for clearing the impacted areas of ordinance and providing the green light proceed with airfield repairs.

"It's very important to train with our [total force] counterparts as we often do downrange," says Senior Master Sgt. Kareem Fuertes, from the 154th Civil Engineer Squadron's Emergency Management Team. "They train together to develop the cohesiveness required to maximize their performance in the field and get our airframes back into the fight."





LAUNA'OLE AWARDS CEREMONY HONORS OUTSTANDING AIRMEN

On a sunny day in Hawaii, the HIANG held its annual Launa'ole Awards Ceremony to recognize its top-performing Airmen for the year of 2024.

The ceremony took place at the prestigious Pacific Air Force's Courtyard of Heroes, a location befitting the honor and dedication of the award recipients. 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," and embodies 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, a traveling award called the Kaleo Nui Award was presented to the 154th Operations Group for delivering a high-spirited music video about HIANG operations. 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
203RD AIR REFUELING SQUADRON



SERVICE TEAM OF THE YEAR
HIANG ROYAL GUARD



WINNING TEAM OF THE YEAR
298TH SUPPORT SQUADRON
KOKE'E AIR FORCE STATION TEAM



KALEO NUI AWARD
154TH MEDICAL GROUP



AIRMAN OF THE YEAR - FULL TIME
SRA MITCHELL WAIKIKI
201ST INTELLIGENCE SQUADRON



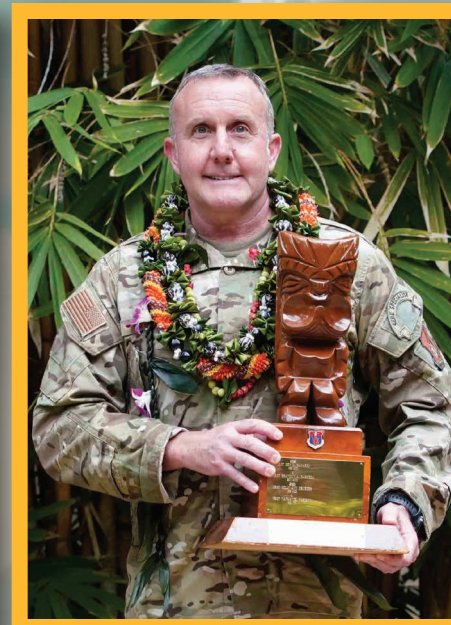
AIRMAN OF THE YEAR - PART TIME
SRA ROBIN DIANA
154TH SECURITY FORCES SQUADRON



NCO OF THE YEAR - FULL TIME
TSGT KALEOLANI SOUZA
298TH SUPPORT SQUADRON



NCO OF THE YEAR - PART TIME
MSGT CHRISTOPHER BRUN
292ND COMBAT COMMUNICATIONS
SQUADRON



SNCO OF THE YEAR - FULL TIME
MSGT NATHANIEL CHRISTY
199TH WEATHER FLIGHT



SNCO OF THE YEAR - PART TIME
MSGT KELLY KRUEGER
169TH AIR DEFENSE SQUADRON



CGO OF THE YEAR - FULL TIME
CAPT TINA KANATUS
154TH FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON



CGO OF THE YEAR - PART TIME
LT BENJAMIN SUISO
154TH SECURITY FORCES SQUADRON



FGO OF THE YEAR - FULL TIME
MAJ MICHAEL HANK
154TH OPERATIONS SUPPORT SQUADRON



FGO OF THE YEAR - PART TIME
ALLISON DELOS SANTOS
154TH SECURITY FORCES SQUADRON



HONOR GUARD MEMBER OF THE YEAR
TECH SGT REID SUZUKI
154TH COMPTROLLER FLIGHT



FIRST SERGEANT OF THE YEAR
MSGT BRANDON OZAKI
154TH CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON

154TH SFS NAMED TOP SECURITY FORCES AIR RESERVE COMPONENT UNIT IN U.S. AIR FORCE

By Tech Sgt John Linzmeier

Defenders from the 154th Security Forces Squadron have earned national accolades, securing the 2023 Security Forces Air Reserve Component Unit Award.

This recognition comes at both the National Guard Bureau level and the Air Force level, highlighting the squadron's exemplary achievements in security operations, international collaboration, and community support.

The prestigious award recognizes exceptional security forces units that have demonstrated outstanding achievements in areas such as mission support, air base ground defense operations, and impact toward security.

"2023 was an extremely successful roller coaster ride for the unit," said Senior Master Sgt. Ryan Schreiner, 154th SFS logistics and readiness senior enlisted leader. "It was a year that warranted support from families, leadership, and the various support functions of the Wing (shout out to Auntie Lorna). All three ensured we thrived. Families kept us grounded, leadership kept us focused and support functions reminded us that our families were good to go, our service was appreciated and a safe place to decompress existed with them."

As the year kicked off, 154th SFS members were already engaged in a major international defense operation in the Africa Area of Responsibility. From August 2022 through May 2023, deployed defenders collaborated with forces from 13 host nations in Operation Juniper Shield. Armed personnel protected more than one billion dollars of warfighting assets and conducted more than 30 joint combat patrols beyond installation boundaries.

Their contribution to the Anti-terrorism Force Protection mission in the region during the same period ensured the safe travel of military and U.S. contract personnel, protecting over 30,000 U.S. military, contractor, and coalition personnel, and safeguarding billions of dollars in high-value assets.

A pivotal and defining moment of the 154th's achievements came through their exceptional response to the most devastating wildfire in Hawaii's history, which struck Lahaina, Maui.

From August 12 to December 31, during a period of profound crisis, the squadron mobilized alongside federal and civilian law enforcement agencies. Their concerted efforts resulted in the protection of more than 3,000 structures and secured 9.3 square miles, offering crucial support to the community's recovery process.

"The response to the Lahaina wildfire was a resounding success if you look at the team's preparedness, deployment, and integration with federal and local enforcement agencies," said Chief Master Sgt. Ricardo Namoca, 154th SFS security forces manager. "A textbook displayed of remarkable coordination and efficiency on both sides. Some of our defenders have very close ties to Lahaina. Collectively it felt more of a responsibility to help rather than a job."

Their efforts ensured the safety of over 9,000 residences was made possible by the squadron's high level of mission readiness and commitment to public safety and disaster response. Moreover, the squadron's collaboration with six federal and local law enforcement agencies accommodated a short-notice visit by the President of the United States to Lahaina demonstrating their ability to rapidly establish complex security operations in support of a national initiative.



Throughout 2023, the squadron's involvement in community and base activities showcased their commitment to service beyond their security duties. Volunteer Airmen provided lead security for the Hawaii National Guard-hosted 2023 Adjutant General Association of the United States Conference. Members also supported the Hawaii Police Department's annual Elementary School Junior Traffic Police Officer Competition and participated in the Show With A Hero holiday event and the Toys for Tots Hawaii program.

These initiatives, coupled with their contribution to the Family Fun Halloween event in Lahaina, illustrate the squadron's dedication to fostering community spirit and support, especially in the aftermath of the devastating wildfire.

Defenders tackle the unique challenge of shifting among varied roles within one career field enforcement, riot control, active shooter education, to jungle defense, requiring distinct mindsets, rules, and equipment. According to Schreiner, the potential for grave errors looms if disciplines are confused, emphasizing the necessity for adaptability. He noted that this adaptability doesn't come easily, but 154th SFS Airmen sought out this line of work, because they know it's not easy.

"I believe character gives them the strength to overcome," said Shreiner. "Their character drove them to pick a [career field] that works long hours, is physically demanding and results in Regularly Scheduled Drills that leave you filthy and exhausted. It takes specific characteristics to volunteer for that, and I believe that is where most of our Defenders derive strength, it's who they are."

The 154th SFS's multifaceted achievements, from leading critical international operations to providing essential community support, exemplify the highest standards of the Air Force Security Forces. Their recognition with the 2023 Air Force Security Forces Unit Award is a fitting example of their exceptional performance and steadfast commitment to both national security and community resilience.

"The Security Forces career field is far from glamorous to say the least; gratifying only to those dedicated to serve and protect," said Namoca. "Our culture fosters mutual support and a deep sense of responsibility towards each other, serving as our collective strength and driving force to overcome any challenge. I couldn't be more proud of how our team worked together to accomplish so much this past year."



Photos By A1C Roann Gatdula

154TH FORCE SUPPORT SQUADRON SWEEPS NATIONAL AWARDS, SETTING NEW LEVEL OF EXCELLENCE

By **Tech Sgt John Linzmeier**

The Hawaii Air National Guard's 154th Force Support Squadron has taken home several National Guard Bureau-level awards for the year 2023, including the Major General Eugene L. Eubank Award.

This latter recognition is awarded to top-performing units that demonstrate exceptional support and service within the Air National Guard. It highlights the critical role of Force Support Squadrons in maintaining operational readiness and enhancing the capabilities of the ANG at both national and international levels.

Last year, the 154th FSS excelled at ensuring members were prepared for essential deployment tasks while ensuring the uninterrupted provision of base services. Their successful efforts enabled 444 Airmen to participate in six large force exercises. They mobilized hundreds of others to support real-world operations across six countries, significantly enhancing multi-national joint interoperability.

"The 154 FSS has successfully put in place the Multi-Capable Airman concept to mitigate manning shortfalls and increased mission sets," said Col. Amy Arfman, 154th Mission Support Group commander. "They truly are remarkable in the level of effort they put out on a continual basis to ensure the men and women of this wing are supported. Their teamwork and 'all hands on deck' approach, regardless of Air Force Specialty Codes and duty titles, is a true mission enabler."

In the Summer of 2023, when the city of Lahaina was struck with one of the most devastating wildfires in U.S. recorded history, members of the 154th FSS played a critical role in helping the community recover. The squadron deployed a 13-member Fatality Search and Recovery Team along with several hundred thousand worth of supplemental equipment. Their rapid response within 24 hours facilitated the clearance of 382 facilities and 379 vehicles. This effort aided FEMA and local emergency services in mitigating toxic exposure risks to the community, resulting in 34 recoveries.

"The Airmen on this team were tested on a physical, mental, and emotional level that most of us never experience, said Arfman. "They are the unsung heroes of the Lahaina Wildfire response. The professionalism, grit, and wherewithal they displayed while supporting the people of this state is a true display of selflessness."

Among the Squadron's top achievements last year, lies their critical contribution to Exercise Talisman Sabre. 154th FSS participation resulted in improvements to deployment reception processes while implementing Agile Combat

Employment practices, supporting staff across a network of seven bases. Their efforts were instrumental in supporting 100 F-22 sorties, which fortified operational readiness among United States, Australia, and thirteen joint coalition partners.

Their commitment to service excellence extended to the culinary domain, providing 60,000 international meals to 35,000 participants during Talisman Sabre, while also ensuring the fitness and readiness of more than 2,300 Airmen.

The squadron's forward-thinking in leadership, innovation, and integration, particularly through initiatives like "Feed Our Airmen" and the development of a cutting-edge military education curriculum, underscores their pivotal role in enhancing Personnel and Services readiness.

Building on the remarkable achievements that led to their receipt of the Major General Eugene L. Eubank Award, members of the 154th FSS have been lauded for their outstanding contributions, earning several other top honors from the NGB. These accolades further underscore the unit's excellence and the exceptional caliber of its personnel:



"All the members of the 154th FSS team are worthy of awards, particularly over the past few years," said Arfman. "We've gained additional F-22s, stood up an Air Defense Group, and took on two new weapon systems in the space arena, all while not gaining any additional manpower in the support units. They are the definition of doing more with less. Capt. Kanatus and Senior Master Sgt. Chu are at the forefront of their success."



CAPT. TINA KANATUS

Force Support Reserve Component Company Grade Officer of the Year (Installation Level): Capt. Tina T. Kanatus is the first known Guardsman to take home this national-level award for the second year running, demonstrating unparalleled leadership and adaptability. Beyond her exceptional performance in assignments within the Pacific Air Force's Inspector General Team and her instrumental role in the administration of Talisman Sabre, her ongoing management of accountability for Joint Task Force-Red Hill stands as a testament to her enduring impact and invaluable contributions to mission success.

SENIOR MASTER SGT HYURN CHU

Force Support Reserve Component Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (SNCO) of the Year (Installation Level): Senior Master Sergeant Hyurn Chu and his strategic leadership have been a cornerstone in elevating the HIANG's combat readiness, notably through his pivotal roles in Exercise Talisman Sabre, operations Spartan Shield and Enduring Sentinel. His direct involvement in training and leading Airmen not only showcased logistic prowess but also significantly bolstered international defense collaboration and combat efficacy, marking a definitive impact on global security dynamics.



154TH FSS FATALITY SEARCH AND RECOVERY TEAM

A1 Special Recognition Team (Installation Level): The 154th FSS Fatality Search and Recovery Team's rapid deployment and successful operation in the wake of the State of Hawaii's deadliest wildfire exemplify their exceptional readiness and efficiency, conducted through the most challenging of circumstances. Covering an expansive area and delivering crucial closures to affected families, their actions highlight an unmatched level of preparedness and commitment to helping those in need.



Photos By **Tech Sgt John Linzmeier and A1C Roann Gatdula**

154TH WING HOSTS SENTRY ALOHA 24-2: JOINT FORCES SYNCHRONIZE FOR COMBAT READINESS

By Tech Sgt John Linzmeier



The Hawaii Air National Guard's 154th Wing concluded the latest iteration of its ongoing fighter exercise, Sentry Aloha 24-2, on June 12 at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

This National Guard Bureau training event brought together more than 1,000 participants from nine states and four service branches throughout two weeks, providing essential combat training to joint and total-forces units.

Aircraft operations were staged and held across geographically separated locations on the islands of Oahu, Hawaii, including Marine Corps Base Hawaii and Ellison Onizuka Kona International Airport at Keāhole.

Visiting fighter and attack aircraft included A-10 Warthogs and F-16 Fighting Falcons from the Air National Guard Air Force Reserve Test Center (AATC), F-16s from the 177th Fighter Wing, F-35A Lighting IIs from the 422nd Test and Evaluation Squadron. These aircraft joined the 154th Wing's locally based F-22 Raptors, operated by the 199th and 19th Fighter Squadrons.

This year's iteration was built around a concept known as distributed mission planning and operations, enabling participants to operate with heightened levels of autonomy as warfighters accomplished a series of combat objectives.

Maj. Michael 'Deuce' Oliver, Sentry Aloha Exercise Director, said this strategic shift challenged them to employ decentralized and flexible practices in dynamic combat environments while facing the threat of advanced enemy aircraft.





Photos by **Tech Sgt Andrew DeMartini, Tech Sgt John Linzmeier, Staff Sgt Robert Cabuco, A1C Connor Taggart**

Daily training sorties focused on air-to-air combat, featuring large-scale combat simulations against adversarial forces, 'red air,' and integration with friendly, 'blue air,' forces.

Several scenarios included blue air fighters protecting A-10 aircraft conducting air-to-ground strikes. These operations took place on the Pohakuloa Training Area on Hawaii Island, with Airmen from the 25th Air Support Operations Squadron on the ground coordinating close air support strikes with the escorted Warthogs.

In addition to the air-to-ground strikes, maritime strike missions were conducted alongside the U.S. Navy, having both scenarios incorporating the support of a U.S. Marine Corps MQ-9A from Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3. The UAV's advanced airborne sensors and communication node provided intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance information to both red and blue air participants throughout the training.



Throughout each training objective, the Hawaii ANG's 169th Air Defense Squadron diligently monitored and relayed battlespace information. They upheld command and control to ensure real-time situational awareness and coordinated responses to evolving threats.

"Exercises like this are exactly what we need to allow us to operate at a much larger scale and as a joint force," said Tech. Sgt. Kukila Carreira-Manin, 169th ADS weapons director. "This also gave us an opportunity to integrate with more expeditionary Air National Guard members from [continental United States], such as the 128th, 116th, and 109th Air Control Squadrons, as well as 3d LAAB Marines stationed at Kaneohe Bay and MACS-4 out of Okinawa, Japan. We're not going to win the fight as a single branch. We as military members on all levels must continue to work together as one to ensure we are relevant and ready in the race for Great Power Competition."

Fighter activity was maintained through air-to-air refueling by local and visiting tanker aircraft, including KC-135 Stratotankers and KC-46A Pegasus airframes. C-130 aircraft variants from the Air Force Reserve Test Center and the 129th Rescue Wing delivered logistical supplies necessary for operations in remote locations, ensuring continued support and operational capability.

Throughout the exercise, AATC tested a developing communication system with airframes like the KC-135, known as Link 16, which facilitates seamless data exchange between aircraft and other sensors. This real-time information sharing capability significantly enhances situational awareness and coordination. The integration of Link 16 on atypical aircraft like tankers during the exercise demonstrated the potential to revolutionize communication strategies in combat scenarios, ensuring more efficient and effective mission execution.

Despite a smaller footprint of 'Hawaiian Raptors' due to off-island deployments, the exercise succeeded in minimizing the impact on general aviation at Honolulu International Airport by dispersing aircraft across multiple locations. This dispersion added complexity to the operations, showcasing the capabilities of conducting distributed planning and ensuring secure communications, provided by members of the Hawaii ANG's 291st and 292nd Combat Communications Squadrons and National Guard augmentees from around the nation.

Key achievements included numerous mission commander upgrades and mission qualification training for the participating fighter squadrons.

Sentry Aloha remains a critical element of combat training, offering invaluable opportunities for total-force Airmen and other DoD services. As the exercise concludes, the lessons learned and skills honed will significantly bolster the readiness of the 154th Wing to support several security initiatives throughout the Indo-Pacific Theater and beyond, ensuring comprehensive preparedness for all involved.

"We've gotten quite a lot done over the past two weeks and are glad to see that many are walking away with some significant milestones checked off," said Oliver. "Our hope is that the immense value gained from these experiences will inspire everyone to return for more opportunities to fly with us, the Hawaiian Raptors, again for more world-class training."



HONORING JULY'S SPIRIT

Encouragement From Chaplain Love

As we step into the month of July, a period often associated with patriotism and reflection on our nation's freedoms, it's a fitting time to recognize and celebrate the courage and commitment that each of you, as Airmen, bring to the United States Air Force. This month, I want to offer words of encouragement, guided by the timeless wisdom of Scripture, and remind you of the profound impact of your service.

Embracing the Call to Serve: Your decision to serve in the Air Force reflects a deep commitment to our country, embodying the core values of integrity, service before self, and excellence in all we do. Each of you answered a call that requires sacrifice, resilience, and unwavering dedication. In moments of doubt or fatigue, remember why you chose this path: to protect and uphold the freedoms we cherish. As the Bible reminds us in Colossians 3:23, "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men." Your service is a noble calling, and your dedication is a testament to your faith and principles.

The Importance of Resilience: Serving in the military is not without its challenges. From the rigors of training to the demands of deployment, you face numerous tests of your physical, mental, and emotional strength. It's essential to cultivate resilience, the ability to bounce back from adversity. Lean on your training, your comrades, and your faith to stay strong. Philippians 4:13 encourages us, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Remember, resilience is not about never falling, but about rising every time you fall, with the strength that comes from your faith.

Finding Strength in Community: The Air Force is more than a collection of individuals; it's a community, a family. Within this family, we find support, camaraderie, and strength. Reach out to your fellow airmen, share your burdens and your joys. Building strong connections can make the toughest times more bearable.

Chaplain's Corner

As a Chaplain, I'm here to support you, providing a listening ear and a compassionate heart. Galatians 6:2 urges us, "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Don't hesitate to seek help when needed; there is no weakness in asking for support.

Upholding Excellence in all we do is a guiding principle of the Air Force. Strive for excellence in every task, no matter how small it may seem. Your dedication to doing your best in every aspect of your service not only advances our mission but also sets a standard for others to follow. Excellence is a habit, cultivated through consistent effort and a commitment to continual improvement. Colossians 3:17 encourages us, "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for your service and dedication. Each of you plays a vital role in the mission of the United States Air Force. Keep pushing forward with courage, resilience, and a commitment to excellence. Remember, you are not alone on this journey; you are part of a strong, supportive community. Thank you for all that you do, and may this month of July renew your spirit and strengthen your resolve.



Capt. Nicholas Love,
154th Wing Chaplain

Lessons from Anna Hall

By Clara M. Balha, LCSW

Anna Hall's journey from a devastating injury to Olympic triumph highlights resilience and the importance of setting Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound (SMART) goals. In 2021, Anna was poised to win the Olympic trials but broke a bone in her left foot during the 100-meter hurdles, disqualifying her. However, in the 2024 Olympic trials, Anna made a remarkable comeback, winning the Heptathlon and securing her place to represent the United States in Paris.

Anna's story illustrates her resilience and success due to setting SMART goals and maintaining standards. Resilience is crucial for Olympic athletes like Anna and Air National Guard (ANG) members. By adhering to her standards and setting SMART goals, Anna recovered from setbacks and maintained her performance over time.



Here's how Anna applied the **SMART** elements:

- Specific:** Anna set a clear goal to strengthen her left foot and improve her overall fitness.
- Measurable:** She tracked her progress by measuring recovery milestones and fitness improvements.
- Achievable:** Anna set realistic goals considering her injury and recovery time frame, aiming for incremental progress.
- Relevant:** Her goals aligned with her broader objective of qualifying for the Olympics.
- Time-bound:** Anna established a timeline for her recovery and training, setting deadlines for each milestone.

Anna's resilience was tested physically, mentally, and emotionally. After her injury, she faced the daunting task of rebuilding her confidence and overcoming the fear of re-injury. She stayed positive, sought support from coaches and medical professionals, and maintained her determination to return stronger. Her journey, requiring patience and perseverance, is a testament to the human spirit's ability to overcome adversity.

For the ANG, setting SMART goals ensures that objectives are clear and attainable. Upholding standards fosters consistent excellence and readiness. This dual focus empowers service members to navigate challenges effectively and maintain operational readiness. Specific goals might include improving physical fitness scores, completing technical training, or enhancing unit cohesion through regular drills and exercises.

Just as Anna Hall achieved greatness through dedication to her craft, upholding standards, SMART goals, and unwavering resilience, members of the ANG can ensure their readiness similarly. This approach enhances individual performance and strengthens the collective mission, ensuring the ANG remains a ready and reliable force. Commitment to readiness provides security and confidence to ANG team members and those they serve.

If you ever need support, remember that the Director of Psychological Health program is here to help!

HAWAII GUARDSMEN, PHILIPPINE AF FORGE STRONGER TIES IN INNOVATIVE STATE PARTNERSHIP EVENT

By Master Sgt. Mysti Bicoy



In a significant step towards strengthening bilateral military cooperation, members of the Hawaii Air National Guard participated in the first Aircraft Maintenance State Partnership Program event with the Philippines Air Force at Basa Air Base, Philippines, on June 11-14.

The exchange coincided with exercise Marine Aviation Support Activity 24, an annual Philippine-U.S. military exercise focused on mutual defense, strengthening relationships, and rehearsing emerging aviation concepts.

Maj. Jared Fujii, 199th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron project officer for MASA 24, saw a unique opportunity to enhance bilateral cooperation by coordinating an SPP event.

“The strategy to integrate with the PAF was extremely well received by the PAF, as they are gearing up for a deployment,” said Fujii. “By aligning the SPP event with MASA 24, we maximized our resources and created a synergistic platform for collaboration, supporting our commitment as state partners.”

Participants from the PAF’s 5th Fighter Wing, 430th Aircraft Maintenance Group, and HIANG’s 154th Wing engaged in comprehensive discussions covering various aspects of deployment. Topics included deployed cargo requirements, aircraft management, logistics, personnel coordination, and the intricacies of planning

large-scale deployments. These discussions allowed members to gain deeper insights into fighter operations, airlift support, and overall aircraft maintenance management, providing opportunities to modify and adopt new practices that can empower warfighters.

The event also highlighted the ongoing bilateral discussions aimed at enhancing the PAF’s fighter deployment capabilities and strategic operational infrastructure. This collaboration is expected to bolster the long-term operational readiness and strategic reach of both forces.

PAF Maj. Reden Apepe, the director of operations of 430th Aircraft Maintenance Group, emphasized the significance of the timing of this exchange, aligning with their preparations for exercise Pitch Black, a large-scale multinational air combat training exercise.

“This SMEE occurred at the perfect time, as we are preparing for exercise Pitch Black,” said Apepe. “Maj. Nuanes and the HIANG team provided expert knowledge on aircraft safety and maintenance processes.”

Additionally, the event featured a bilateral community outreach initiative where members of the HIANG and PAF volunteered at a local orphanage in the Philippines.

“The outreach effort orchestrated by Master Sgt. Mysti Bicoy, highlighted the commitment of both forces to humanitarian efforts,

fostering goodwill and the spirit of Aloha among the 36 children and the five-person all-volunteer staff at the orphanage,” said Maj. Jennifer Nuanes, SPP team lead. “The smiles and laughter we saw on the children’s faces were overwhelming,” Nuanes continued. “It reminded us all of the simple yet profound difference we can make in people’s lives, even with small acts of kindness.”

Nuanes emphasized the exceptional role and deep cultural connections brought by Chief Master Sgt. Wendell Villanueva, the senior enlisted leader of the 154th Maintenance Group, in orchestrating the event. As one of the few remaining service members who experienced the historic eruption of Mount Pinatubo at Clark Air Base over 30 years ago, Villanueva has been building strong relationships with the PAF and the local community for decades. His local connections extend to the family he married into

in the 1980s, and his career-field expertise has been invaluable in ensuring seamless coordination.

“Through a history framework built by Chief Master Sgt. Villanueva, the event went beyond mere information exchange; it fostered a deeper understanding and mutual respect between the HIANG and PAF,” said Nuanes. “From logistical planning to facilitating discussions and workshops, his leadership was instrumental in making the event a success.”

Hawaii and the Philippines share a unique bond through the State Partnership Program, which connects National Guard units with foreign militaries to foster long-term security relationships and enhance international cooperation. Established in 2000, this partnership is the longest-standing in the Indo-Pacific region.





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 feather 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.