



## NEWS RELEASE FROM THE NAVFAC HAWAII PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

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### NAVFAC Hawaii Acknowledges Excellent Work of Employees

**PEARL HARBOR** – Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Hawaii held its annual Employee of the Year ceremony Apr. 23 to honor 16 individual employees and three teams, a total of 50 command members, who were nominated for their outstanding work in 2012.

“Once a year we pause to formally recognize just a few of our very talented and dedicated federal employees here at NAVFAC Hawaii,” said Capt. Michael Williamson, commanding officer. “This is an opportunity to celebrate the contributions of our highly talented federal employee workforce, highlight their accomplishments, say thanks and inspire others to follow in their footsteps.”

Winners are selected from a pool of nominees separated by seven categories and based on their work in 2012. This year NAVFAC Hawaii’s winners are:

Kalsie A. Aquino - Federal Leader/Supervisor/Manager of the Year – Aquino is a Kaneohe resident and Supervisory Management Services Support Specialist. She cultivates a positive work environment at the Management Services Department which has shown to increase productivity and has led to an improved quality of administration program support services provided to command personnel. She demonstrates superb communication skills by giving clear direction for command work to her staff. Aquino has fostered significant improvement in the Personnel and Physical security, and Property Management programs. Her contributions have led a highly productive team who are often called upon to provide support to numerous command initiatives.

James F. Luhia - Federal Employee of the Year (Professional, Administrative and Technical) – Luhia is a resident of Waianae and a Safety and Occupational Health Specialist. He provides oversight and support for the Facilities, Engineering, and Acquisition Division (FEAD) Team and serves as the command’s Fall Protection Program Manager. Last year, Luhia trained employees on personal fall arrest and fall restraint systems, saving NAVFAC Hawaii up to \$75,000 dollars of external costs which is critical during budget restrictions. He possesses an extensive background in construction and is committed to the command’s safety program. Luhia demonstrates accessibility to fellow safety teammates and employees providing support 24/7.

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## 2-2-2-2 NAVFAC Hawaii Acknowledges Excellent Work of Employees

Theresa M. Yamamoto – Federal Employee of the Year (Clerical and Assistant) – Yamamoto is a resident of Pearl City and the Management Assistant for the command's Operations Office. She has successfully balanced the duties of handling many requests and demands made by the command's large operations team while exhibiting a positive and proactive attitude while working with others at all times. Yamamoto demonstrates competency in prioritizing tasks and excels with added responsibilities of covering NAVFAC Hawaii's front office requirements as needed. She contributes to the development and management of various operational reports and coordinates with information technology employees to optimize efficiencies across a joint Navy and Air Force workforce.

Russell J. Reynolds – Federal Employee of the Year (Trades and Crafts) – Reynolds is a resident of Ewa Beach and an Electronic Industrial Controls Specialist. He has demonstrated leadership qualities when tested. In 2012 he accepted 13 new buildings and identified 13 National Fire Protection Agency deficiencies. Reynolds coordinated directives for a \$27,000 dollar upgrade, replacing 325 detectors in five days while safeguarding \$42 million dollars in assets. He also performed dormitory fire alarm system repairs and fixed faulty wiring resulting in a savings of \$30,000 dollars. Reynolds assisted Joint-Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in repairing facilities with systematic problems reducing work orders by 59 percent.

Miles K. Kutara – Mentor of the Year – Kutara is a resident of Hawaii Kai and a lead civil engineer. He is a dedicated employee who tutors the Capital Improvement staff on proper use of electronic applications as a tool to improve performance. He also responds to inquiries from command personnel and develops solutions for the organization's many electronic applications and how they operate and interact. Kutara is one of seven employees who provided training throughout the NAVFAC organization on the "Seven Steps to Manage Work from Inception to Completion." He has enabled an efficient transition in the operations of business compared to non-government/private companies.

David A. Choo – Exceptional Community Service – Choo is a resident of Kaneohe and an architect for the command. In addition, he is an active community mentor who currently serves as a volunteer Head Coach for the Lakeside Athletic Club, a non-profit organization for youth 10-14 which offers programs such as basketball, volleyball, football and baseball. Choo demonstrates a passion for sports which translates into giving back to the community through coaching various youth sports programs for different organizations. He enthusiastically develops his player's confidence, self value, respect and accountability. Choo has also volunteered as a Head Coach for the Saint Louis middle and high school summer league ILH programs including the intermediate volleyball league as well as assistant coached the basketball teams.

The NAVFAC Hawaii Remediation Team – Team Excellence – The Remediation Team is comprised of 22 employees who are a mission-inspired safety conscious group that have been acclaimed for their innovative, time-sensitive approach to intensely industrial and hazardous asbestos removal and lead-based paint abatement projects. Their teamwork generates creative solutions to handle building demolition hazards. They have received numerous Safety Work Center of the Quarter Awards. As a result of their exceptional work, the group is consistently in demand for high priority emergency remediation projects while they continue to meet scheduled commitments.

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### 3-3-3-3 NAVFAC Hawaii Acknowledges Excellent Work of Employees

In addition to receiving plaques from the command, these outstanding employees were submitted to Honolulu-Pacific Federal Executive Board's 57th Annual Excellence in Federal Government Awards Program as command representative. As such on May 10 at the Hickam Air Force Base Officers Club, they will be individually acknowledged and receive a certificate recognizing their important contributions to their federal agency.

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Photos/cutlines: High-resolution images are available. Please contact Denise Emsley.



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PEARL HARBOR (Apr. 23, 2013) Six Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) Hawaii individual award winners stand together with Capt. Michael Williamson, commanding officer, after the command's annual Employee of the Year ceremony Apr. 23. Photo includes: L-R Miles Kutara, Kalsie Aquino, Theresa Yamamoto, Capt. Williamson, James Luhia and David Choo. Missing the Remediation Team representative and supervisor Eldon Souza. (U.S. Navy photo by Denise Emsley, NAVFAC Hawaii Public Affairs Officer/Released)

For more information about NAVFAC Hawaii and/or Naval Facilities Engineering Command visit:  
[www.navfac.navy.mil](http://www.navfac.navy.mil).

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#### **Naval Facilities Engineering Command: The Facilities and Expeditionary Combat Systems Command**

NAVFAC is the Systems Command that delivers and maintains quality, sustainable facilities, acquires and manages capabilities for the Navy's expeditionary combat forces, provides contingency engineering response, and enables energy security and environmental stewardship. Additional updates and information about NAVFAC can be found on social media sites Facebook and Twitter. Become a Fan at [www.facebook.com/navfac](http://www.facebook.com/navfac) and follow us at [www.twitter.com/navfac](http://www.twitter.com/navfac), or visit our Photostream on Flickr at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/navfac>.