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**HAWAI'I INTERNET CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN TASK FORCE HONORED WITH
TOP PENTAGON AWARD FOR MILITARY PARTNERSHIP COMBATING CHILD SEX
TRAFFICKING CRIMES**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 3, 2024

HONOLULU – The Department of the Army presented the prestigious 2023 Army Community Partnership Award to the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division (CID) Pacific Field Office, in partnership with the Department of the Attorney General's Criminal Justice Division - Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force, the Honolulu Police Department and the Susannah Wesley Community Center. The award recognized the military, local law enforcement and community agencies that have come together through Operation Keiki Shield to combat internet and child sex trafficking crimes within the active-duty military in Hawai'i.

"As a representative of the Department of the Army Criminal Investigation Division, I am honored to present the Community Partnership Award to the dedicated stakeholders of Operation Keiki Shield. This task force exemplifies the power of collaboration in our shared mission to protect the most vulnerable members of our community. The commitment and efforts put forth by Operation Keiki Shield in setting up operations to arrest those who seek to harm our children are both commendable and essential," said Ruben R. Santiago, the Special Agent in Charge of the Army CID Pacific Field Office. "The Community Partnership Award symbolizes our ongoing dedication to preventing these heinous crimes and ensuring the safety of children in Hawai'i. Together, we stand united in our resolve to create a safer environment for our keiki, demonstrating that through partnership and vigilance, we can and will make a difference."

"Army CID has been a critical partner working with the Hawai'i Department of the Attorney General's ICAC Unit to participate in six military lead Operation Keiki Shields in the past 5 years," said ICAC Supervisory Special Agent Edward Arias. "They have participated in the arrest and/or prosecution of over 45 active-duty military personnel

and continue to be an invaluable partner combatting internet crimes against children within the military in Hawaii.”

“Operations like *Keiki Shield* are important in stopping individuals who are intent on using the internet to harm our children. The HPD is committed to protecting our keiki, and we will continue to work with the task force and partner agencies to locate and arrest those who prey on vulnerable minors,” said HPD Chief Joe Logan.

“We acknowledge our federal, state, and county law enforcement partners as well as our community partners who work with ICAC. Their unified effort is essential for the capture and prosecution of predators who sexually exploit and traffic Hawai‘i’s youth,” said Attorney General Anne Lopez.

The Army Community Partnership Award recognizes Army installations and their community partners for initiatives that improve soldier and family quality of life, support Army priorities and strengthen local community relationships, among other things.

There were six military installations and communities from across the United States recognized at the Pentagon’s Hall of Heroes ceremony in April.

The other five awardees are:

- U.S. Army Garrison-Hawai‘i and the Hawaiian Electric Company for the Department of Defense HECO Executive Committee, which forged a partnership for energy solutions, resilience and renewable energy, including the creation of 50 biodiesel microgrids at Schofield Barracks, which avoided \$645 million in costs and enhanced Indo-Pacific resilience.
- Joint Force Headquarters, Tennessee National Guard, and Lipscomb University for the Leadership and Public Service Graduate Program, which offers a specialized cohort for service members pursuing a Master of Arts in leadership and public service, with 13 Tennessee National Guard members set to graduate in December 2023.
- USAG Cavazos and Workforce Solutions of Central Texas for the WSTC Transition Assistance Program, which connects transitioning Soldiers and active-duty spouses with high-skill, high-wage jobs.
- USAG Rock Island Arsenal and the State of Illinois for the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System, which benefits Army and community emergency response capabilities, with the RIA fire department responding to numerous incidents over the past year.
- The Georgia National Guard and the University System of Georgia for expanding the National Guard’s presence across state universities, offering recruiting offices on campuses to foster military career access for students.

The ICAC Task Force is part of a cooperative nationwide network of ICAC Task Forces supported by the U.S. Department of Justice and dedicated to protecting children by investigating and prosecuting persons who victimize children in the online environment.

Anyone with information regarding missing children or the exploitation of children is encouraged to contact your local police department or the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678).

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