



Media Release

Public Affairs Office
U.S. Army Garrison, Hawaii
(808)656-3160
“Malama na Koa”

Release number: 2013-09-01
Sept. 25, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Army invites community to honor Gold Star Mothers

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii – Army officials invite the community to take part in honoring the mothers and families of fallen service members at a ceremony in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Punchbowl, Sept. 29, at 11:30 a.m.

During the annual Gold Star Mothers Day ceremony, mothers and their families will place the boots of their lost sons or daughters, as well as a lei of honor and remembrance, at the foot of the cemetery’s Lady Columbia statue. The statue stands on a hill overlooking the cemetery and represents all grieving mothers of the Armed Forces, as she vigilantly watches over the fallen.

“We owe our deepest gratitude and respect to the mothers and families who have survived such losses,” said Col. Daniel Whitney, commander, U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii, and ceremony host. “Their strength and resilience is humbling and inspiring to us all.”

Mothers of fallen service members began calling themselves Gold Star Mothers during World War One. The name was derived from the custom of military families putting a small flag in their home’s front window. The flag featured a star for each family member serving in the Armed Forces—living members denoted by a blue star, and a gold star honoring family members killed in the line of duty. Today Gold Star Mothers include all mothers whose children have died serving in the Armed Forces, whether be it by illness, accident, or sadly by taking their own life.

The United States began observing Gold Star Mothers Day in 1936. The last Sunday in September is nationally recognized every year by a presidential proclamation to honor the sacrifice and strength of its Gold Star Mothers.

-30-

MEDIA NOTE: Interested media should contact the USAG-HI Public Affairs Office to attend the event or request photographs. Please R.S.V.P. no later than 4 p.m., Sept 28. Contact Mr. Dennis Drake, director, USAG-HI PAO, at (808) 226-2706 or Kayla Overton, USAG-HI PAO, at (808) 220-9223.