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## **Hawaii Island Youth Visit Pōhakuloa Training Area**

**PŌHAKULOLOA TRAINING AREA, Hawaii** – The Army recently hosted several educational tours to Pōhakuloa Training Area for three Hawaii Island youth organizations, here.

Dozens of youth from the Kona Hongwangi Cub Scout Troop, Hawaii Island Youth Corp, and students from Waiakea Elementary School were given the opportunity to tour PTA's facilities, view equipment, and learn more about the Army's Cultural and Natural Resource programs during several interactive tours at the Hawaii Island Army installation.

"An important part of what we do is ensuring that we are part of the community. Working with the youth of the Island is one way we can give back and, quite frankly, these visits become the highlight of our staff's week," said Lt. Col. Eric P. Shwedo, commander, U.S. Army Garrison-Pōhakuloa.

Several Kona Hongwangi Cub Scouts tried on specialized protective gear to get a feel of how PTA's Environmental Resources staff works out in the field.

When taking a stroll through PTA's interpretive gardens, Paul Martin, a Natural Resource Specialist at PTA, introduced some of Hawaii's endangered and rare plant species and highlighted that PTA manages and protects 15 threatened and endangered plant species.

Visitors were also given the opportunity to participate in mock mapping of archeological sites and viewed photos of types of archeological sites found at PTA, the Cultural Resources section at PTA manages more than 300 state-registered archeological sites.

Hawaii Island Youth Corp visitors were also given the opportunity to inspect insects in a display with Natural Resources Specialist, Marty Kawasaki.

"The entire day we were welcomed warmly and greeted positively – that made the boys feel at ease," said Anthony Savvis, Hawaii Island Youth Corps. "From all the different stations we went through [including] wildlife [and the] EMT crew at the fire station, [they] let the boys know there are different aspects to [the whole of] PTA."

Waiakea Elementary students also enjoyed the opportunity to learn about firefighting at PTA.

"I think it is well organized, plenty of hands on activities with the kids, I think it's great," said Leanne Silva, teacher at Waiakea Elementary School. "The content matches the curriculum we teach."



Anna Tajeda, PTA Archeology Program Manager, interacts with Kona Hongwanji Cub Scouts.



Paul Martin, PTA Natural Resources Specialist, in PTA's Interpretive Garden speaks with Kona Hongwanji Cub Scouts.



Members of the 84<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion and Kona Hongwanji Cub Scouts



Anthony Savvis pictured (left) here with members enrolled in the Hawaii Island Youth Corps and Lt. Col. Eric P. Shwedo.



Young men of the Hawaii Island Youth Corps inspect insects with Natural Resources Specialist, Marty Kawasaki.



Waiakea Elementary 4<sup>th</sup> Graders trying out protective gear during their visit to PTA.



James Yamanoha, of PTA's Fire Department shows a 4<sup>th</sup> Grader from Waiakea Elementary School how to put out a fire.



Jhakotta Lewis, Cultural Resources Technician, points out pictures of caves to 4<sup>th</sup> Graders from Waiakea Elementary School.