



# KŪKA'ĪLIMOKU

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



## FLY FASTER

# Inside KUKA'ILIMOKU

DECEMBER  
2017

◆  
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Master Sgt. Mysti Bicoy

Tech. Sgt. Alison Bruce-Maldonado

Staff Sgt. James Ro

Senior Airman Orlando Corpuz

Senior Airman Robert Cabuco

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Phone: (808) 448-8117

Email: [154wg.pa@us.af.mil](mailto:154wg.pa@us.af.mil)

URL: [www.154wg.ang.af.mil](http://www.154wg.ang.af.mil)

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**Kuka'ilimoku SUBMISSIONS**

**Articles:**

- Articles range from 200 to 2,000 words. All articles should be accompanied by multiple high-resolution images.
- 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.
- Include the photographer's name and rank, and a caption: what is happening in the photo, who is pictured and the date and location.

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# Message from COMMAND

## ALOHA 154TH MEMBERS!

*Wishing you a most enjoyable holiday season!*

by Brig. Gen. **GREGORY S. WOODROW**, 154th Wing Commander

First - I hope you find the time to give credit where credit is due, and spend some time, give some love, to the people that support you. Whether they're into expensive presents, quiet dinners, a Sunday walk, or just spending time together - we never ever thank the people that support us enough. Make a deliberate effort to do it often.

Second. Let me thank YOU! It's the people, and their culture, that define an organization, and set it apart. YOU all give so much to our organization, whether it's grinding through the administrivia that's required to run a Wing our size, or accomplishing some of our cool, cutting edge missions, YOU all do it with style, a sense of humor, and a huge helping of Aloha! I'm incredibly proud just to be a part of the HIANG, and thankful every day that I'm blessed with the opportunity to work amongst such awesome professionals.

Third. Let me recap some of the outstanding accomplishments from '17. Deployments, deployments, deployments. Did you know that in the last two years, we've deployed over 1250 Wing members, that's over half the Wing, in support of 37 contingencies/exercises on all 7 continents. PACOM TSPs, Neptune Hawk, Balikatan, Valiant Shield, Red Flag Alaska, Pacific Sentry, Keen Edge, Tropic Thunder, Northern Edge, Southern Strike, Key Resolve, Combat Archer, Combat Hammer, ERI, CENTCOM, AFRICOM, even Antarctica. To name a few. And, we did 887+ man-years of MPA for 16/17! That's the equivalent of 445 people on full-time Active Duty for two years! Most

of that was in support of PACAF and PACOM, but we did a few tours in support of other entities as well. Impressive!

Fourth. What I wish for you for in '18: personal, and professional growth. You want something? You gotta work at it, and be willing to make an investment. Take some time to sit down, think and reflect, and come up with some things that are important, meaningful, and enduring, and set some goals for yourself.

Personal growth: When all is said and done, no one looks back on their life, and wishes they'd spent more time at work. The "things" that transcend time, and define us, are our relationships. In fact, the best thing about working in the HIANG are the relationships we all share. So make it a point to target one or two of those key relationships in your life, and deliberately work on them. Quit thinking about what you want, what your friend/partner/spouse can do for you, and instead put them first. What is important to them? What could you do for them, without them asking, that would make them eternally grateful, appreciative, or feel special? Or just make it a point to reach out to a few people that you may not even know very well, but could use a friend. Being a friend, is the best way to have a whole bunch of friends. You'll watch your status, and sphere of influence grow as you become that much more important to those special people in your life.

Professional growth: Upgrade in your AFSC. Take a leadership course. Tackle that PME you've been putting off. Consider a special duty assignment like

first sergeant, or recruiter. Volunteer for some stuff in your office/squadron. Offer to be a mentor, or mentee. The key to GROWING, is getting outside of your comfort zone. If the idea of that scares you, start with something small. Whatever you choose, set a goal, commit to it, and stick with it. Like most worthwhile things, in the end I guarantee you'll get more back than you put in. And the organization will benefit too.

Thanks again for everything you do for our organization! Take some well-deserved time off over the holidays, set some goals for the upcoming year, and commit to growing both personally and professionally, for your own good!

Aloha,  
Woody



# HAWAII ANG PILOTS HELP AIR FORCE CUT COSTS, SAVE ENERGY

by **CORRIE POLAND**, Air Force Operational Energy

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – On a Sunday morning just outside of Anchorage, Alaska, a group of Hawaii Air National Guard fighter pilots gathered around a desk on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson to hear the day's operational briefing after three weeks of training at Red Flag Alaska.

As they sipped coffee and listened to the Delivery Control Officer, they learned the mission was not difficult, but it was certainly unique.

In support of the Air Force Operational Energy Program, six F-22 Raptors flew from Alaska to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, accompanied by two aerial refueling KC-10 Extenders on Aug. 13, 2017, to determine if flying at an increased speed could optimize operational energy consumption.

"It's important to preserve our resources," says Capt. Dan Thompson, an F-22 Raptor pilot and the flight lead.

"Good training is an absolute necessity for our combat capability, so preserving resources and hours on the airplane gives us the ability to invest those [hours] in training opportunities and time back home," Thompson said.

The concept of increased speed, although seemingly counter-intuitive, was first explored by the 618th Air Operations Center in 2014. They discovered that flying at a higher speed could save total fuel consumption and flight hours, but it still needed to be proven in action.

To demonstrate the concept, one cell of F-22s and an accompanying tanker for refueling, flew at a higher velocity, while the other cell flew the standard profile and acted as a control group. Throughout the five hour flight, researchers collected multiple data points in order to compare results from both cells. The faster cell was able to cut about ten percent off the total flight time and six percent of the fuel required for this type of aircraft re-deployment.

"Last year about 1250 Air Force fighter aircraft were deployed/redeployed in this manner," said Roberto Guerrero, Air Force Deputy Assistant Secretary for Operational Energy. "Smart execution like this not only saves us operational costs, but more importantly, preserves time on the aircraft for higher value sorties like combat and training."

As the largest consumer of fuel across the U.S. federal government, spending nearly \$5 billion annually, the Air Force aims to increase operational energy efficiency while continuing to ensure mission success. The next step is to apply this method across other fighter platforms.

"When it comes to operational energy, it's important to be as efficient as possible, allowing us to maximize the number of fighters we move and saving both the government and the taxpayer money while doing it," said Lt. Col. Russell Johnson, Air Operation Squadron Delivery Control Officer from the Air Operation Squadron at Air Combat Command Headquarters.

The mission of Air Force Operational Energy is to break barriers by connecting Airmen with technology, data and innovative thinking to develop and champion energy-informed solutions across the Air Force. For more information and news visit: [www.safie.hq.af.mil/OpEnergy/](http://www.safie.hq.af.mil/OpEnergy/) and [www.Facebook.com/AirForceEnergy](https://www.facebook.com/AirForceEnergy).

**F-22 fighter pilots receive briefing on mission requirements at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage, Alaska, August 13, 2017. The pilots were part of a demonstration, in coordination with Air Force Operational Energy (SAF/IEEN) to assess if flying at an increased speed consumes less fuel while saving precious flight hours.** (U.S. Air Force photo by Corrie Poland)



**An F-22 Raptor aircraft prepares to take off during an Air Force Operational Energy mission at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Anchorage, Alaska, August 13, 2017. The aircraft were part of a demonstration to assess if flying at an increased speed consumes less fuel while saving precious flight hours.** (U.S. Air Force photo by Corrie Poland)

# YOUR END-OF-YEAR FINANCIAL CHECKLIST

by **BETHY VALLEJO**, Personal Financial Counselor



Before the end of 2017, max out your retirement contributions and give to charity.

Adapted from: <https://money.usnews.com/money/personal-finance/articles/2014/12/02/your-end-of-year-financial-checklist>

The final month of the year is a good time to get your finances in order and prepare for the New Year. Here's a look at end-of-year financial tasks to tackle:

- **Max out retirement contributions.** You have until you file your tax return next spring to make a contribution to an individual retirement account (IRA), but 401(k) contributions are only deductible when made in the same calendar year. The 2017 contribution limit is \$18,000 for 401Ks (to include the TSP) and \$5,500 for IRAs (with an extra \$6,000 catch-up contribution option for those ages 50 and older).
- **Donate to charity.** Dec. 31 is the deadline for charitable contributions you plan to deduct from your tax return.
- **Use up FSA money.** If you still have money set aside in a flexible spending account for health care expenses, see if you can order new glasses or schedule that dental work you've been putting off. Some companies offer a grace period into the spring or an FSA carry-over from one year to the next, but if your employer doesn't offer these provisions, then you'll lose any unused funds once we ring in the new year.

Here are some additional steps that only apply in certain circumstances:

- **Consider a Roth conversion** [if you were deployed to a combat zone during the year]. An individual with a traditional IRA and low taxable income might want to convert that traditional IRA to a Roth IRA before the end of the year. "[The conversion to a Roth IRA is] going to be reported as taxable income, so we'd take advantage of paying that tax in a lower tax bracket."
- **Adjust your tax withholding.** If you've gotten married, divorced or had kids in 2014, then you probably need to update your withholding with your employer's human resources department. "A lot of times they need to adjust their W4," McGrath says. "I would rather they have that money where they control it [than get a large tax refund]."
- **Defer income and accelerate expenses.** Income that arrives in 2017 is taxable in 2017, so in some instances, it might make sense to delay that income to delay the tax bill. Those who want to reduce their tax liability may want to accelerate tax-deductible expenses (for instance, if your medical costs exceed 10 percent of your adjusted gross income in a single year) or prepay recurring expenses like property taxes before the end of the year.
- **Make 529 plan contributions.** Money saved in a 529 plan grows tax-free when used for eligible educational expenses, and some states have additional tax benefits for residents who contribute to a plan in that state.

Contact your Personal Financial Counselor, **Bethy Vallejo**, if you need assistance with these or any other personal financial concerns: (808) 238-8111, email: [PFC2.HI.NG@zeiders.com](mailto:PFC2.HI.NG@zeiders.com)



# FLYING SQUADRONS WELCOME NEW COMMANDERS

by **STAFF WRITER**, 154th Wing Public Affairs

**12/15/2017 – JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii** – Two Hawaii Air National Guard flying squadrons welcomed new commanders in the month of December.

In two separate Change of Command ceremonies held over the December drill weekend, the 204th Airlift Squadron and the 199th Fighter Squadron recognized their new leadership.

A Change of Command ceremony conducted December 2, in the Hollister Auditorium, at the C-17 Operations facility saw Lt. Col. Robert Chowhoy relinquish command of the heavy lift squadron to Lt. Col. Anthony Davis.

Davis's Air Force career began in 1991 with the active duty. He joined the Hawaii Air National Guard as a member of the 204 AS in 2003 and most recently served as its director of operations.

December 3, had the "Hawaiian Raptors" welcoming in their new commander.

A Change of Command ceremony held at the Daniel K. Inouye F-22 Maintenance and Operations building ushered in Lt. Col. Shane Nagatani as the new head of

the Raptor squadron as he assumed command from Lt. Col. Kristoff Sills.

Nagatani was born in Honolulu, Hawaii and is a graduate of the Mid-Pacific Institute. He received his commission into the U.S. Air Force in 1999 upon earning a Bachelor degree from Carnegie-Mellon University. Nagatani most recently served as the Hawaiian Raptors' director of operations.

The 204th and 199th are two of three flying squadrons for the Hawaii Air National Guard. Together with the 203rd Air Refueling Squadron, which operates the KC-135 Stratotanker, the squadrons provide a triad of air operations capabilities for the Hawaii Air National Guard.

All three flying squadrons ushered in new commanders in 2017, with the 203rd welcoming in Lt. Col. Scott Oka as commander in September.



# CHIEF VERMEER RETIRES

In a retirement ceremony held December 2, at the C-17 Ops building, Chief Master Sergeant Aaron J. Vermeer retired after over 30 years of service in the Air National Guard. Vermeer enlisted with the Nebraska Air National Guard in 1985. In 1995 he transferred to the Hawaii Air National Guard joining the 203rd Air

Refueling Squadron as an Aircrew Life Support Specialist. In addition to several deployments, Vermeer has served as the 154th Operations Group Aircrew Flight Equipment superintendent. He retires from his most recent position as the Superintendent of the 154th Operations Support Squadron.



# ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

## How Do YOU Count Your Blessings?

Shared by **Ms. KANANI KRAFFT**, 154th WG DPH, LCSW

We all have the potential to adopt a habit of Counting Blessings. Comprehensive Airman Fitness includes a Mental Health Domain, and a tenet of that domain is “Positive Thinking”. In addition, Master Resiliency Training devotes a whole section on Counting Blessings- Gratitude. More and more research points out that an attitude of gratitude has an abundance of benefits. How do YOU Count your Blessings?

Below is an article by Dr. Alexandra Kelly (some sections have been summarized) and I thought it'd be nice to share. Enjoy...

## **The Surprising Power of Gratitude:** *Strategies for Promoting Service Members Psychological Health through Thankfulness*

“Gratitude is not only the greatest of the virtues,” wrote the Roman statesman Cicero, “but the parent of all of the others.” Indeed, the qualities of thankfulness and appreciation are well-established spiritual and social values. In recent years, however, gratitude has also emerged as a focus of intervention in medical and mental health treatment.

Researchers in the area of positive psychology – the study of factors that lead to human flourishing and fulfillment – have found that cultivating gratitude in one’s day-to-day life is associated with a number of physical and mental health benefits. Making an effort to tune into and express gratitude has been found to improve sleep quality, reduce stress, mitigate depression symptoms, support coping with chronic pain, and enhance subjective well-being and self-rated health.

Interventions that promote gratitude may have particular relevance for service members. Military life is often stressful, and can require considerable hardship and sacrifice. Purposeful efforts to acknowledge the good things in one’s life may serve as a protective factor against mental health impacts of unavoidable life and military stressors. While there is limited research into the influence of gratitude on active-duty service members, studies focusing on military veterans support this notion. For example, a recent national study found that among military veterans with high levels of lifetime trauma exposure, dispositional gratitude was one of several factors associated with resilience to symptoms of post-traumatic stress, depression, and anxiety.

Here are some ways to incorporate gratitude into your day-to-day thought processes:

- **Gratitude Journaling:** This is the practice of recording day-to-day events, interactions, and experiences for which one is grateful – typically on a daily or weekly basis. This writing exercise can encompass happenings from the present day, as well as past events that you may not have appreciated fully in the moment. Reflect on positive personal developments, such as encouraging words from Leadership, as well as larger national or world events, like new legislation that benefits veterans (or other causes or communities to which you feel connected). The key is for you to journal regularly to support the development of a gratitude practice, with effects that build over time as gratitude becomes a positive habit.
- **Gratitude Letter Writing:** This is the expression of gratitude to someone who has had a positive influence on you. You might select someone who is currently an important source of support, like a spouse or senior enlisted leader, or someone from the past who might not be aware of their impact on you, like a former teacher or coach. You might write a brief letter explaining in detail why you are grateful to the recipient, how the person’s actions affected you, and how often you think about the recipient and their actions. Gratitude letter writing can be done as a one-time activity, or as a letterwriting campaign to multiple recipients; again, research suggests that additional letters yield an incremental benefit.



- **Stop-Look-Go:** This gratitude-inflected mindfulness exercise may be a good option for those who are open to gratitude activities but aren't keen on writing. This activity calls on the participant to: **STOP** whatever you are doing and become aware of your surroundings and the present moment, **LOOK** at what life is offering you right now (What can I be grateful for in this moment? What opportunity is life presenting me?), and then **GO** do something with it, whether it's simply enjoying the moment or – when life is challenging – embracing the opportunity to learn or grow from those circumstances. Of course, simply remembering to be mindful is half the battle, so it may also be helpful to create reminders (or “stop signs”) to practice this technique one to two times per day, perhaps by setting a phone alarm or placing a sticker next to a mirror or light switch.

Those who maintain a gratitude mindset have been found to experience reduced stress and burnout.

Dr. Alexandra Kelly is a contracted psychological health subject matter expert at the Psychological Health Center of Excellence. She has a master's degree in counseling and psychological services and a Ph.D. in counseling psychology. She specializes in trauma, vocational psychology, and multicultural counseling.

Let your friendly DPHs help you Count Your Blessings and gain an Attitude of Gratitude to add happiness and fulfillment to life!

**Yumi Panui, LCSW, CSAC**  
 154th WING DPH  
 Office: 808-448-8141  
 Cell: 808-800-1327  
[Yumi.Panui@us.af.mil](mailto:Yumi.Panui@us.af.mil)

**Kanani Krafft, LCSW**  
 154th WING DPH  
 Office: 808-448-8145  
 Cell: 808-600-4299  
[Barbra.Krafft@us.af.mil](mailto:Barbra.Krafft@us.af.mil)



## FIVE-STEP BLENDED RETIREMENT SYSTEM (BRS) CHECKLIST TO SUCCESS

### STEP 1

Determine your **eligibility**.



### STEP 2

Take the mandatory **BRS Opt-In Course**.



### STEP 3

**Educate** yourself on the BRS and use the BRS Calculator to analyze your estimated benefits.



### STEP 4

**Schedule** an appointment to consult your installation personal financial manager/counselor



### STEP 5

Make your **decision** between January 1, 2018 and December 31, 2018.



[www.militarysaves.org](http://www.militarysaves.org)

Online pledges are accepted through  
**January 12, 2018** by visiting  
<http://cfc-hawaii.org>

All Paper Pledge Forms must be  
post marked by **January 12, 2018**



## Combined Federal Campaign Privacy Act Statement

Pursuant to 5 U.S. C. 522a(e)(3), this Privacy Act Statement informs you why OPM is requesting information on this form.

**AUTHORITY:** OPM is authorized to collect the information on this form based upon the authority provided in Executive Order (EO) 12353 (March 23, 1982), as amended by EO 13743 (October 13, 2016), and 5 CFR 950 (January 1, 2017). In addition, Executive Order 9397 (November 22, 1943), as amended by EO 13478 (November 18, 2008), permits us to collect your Social Security Number (SSN).

**PURPOSE:** The information you provide is primarily collected and used by OPM to accurately receive, process, acknowledge, and account for your donation to the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC); and to make payments to the charitable organizations to which you choose to donate.

**ROUTINE USES:** The information we collect from you may be disclosed as a "routine use" to your payroll service provider, if you have chosen to make a recurring gift via payroll deduction; or to your credit card company, bank, or other financial institution for a one-time or recurring gift (using the CFC's online option) via credit card, electronic check, or automatic deduction from your financial account. With your authorization, we may also share the information you provide to us with local, national, or international charitable organizations or federations. In addition, we may share your information as a "routine use" with other external entities, such as law enforcement or state and federal tax authorities, when the disclosure is necessary to investigate a violation or potential violation of civil or criminal law. A complete list of routine uses can be found in the system of records notice for OPM 20, National CFC System.

**CONSEQUENCES OF FAILING TO PROVIDE INFORMATION:** Providing this information, including your SSN, is voluntary; however, without your signature and all of the information requested, it may not be possible for us to make this gift on your behalf, and we may suspend this pledge. In addition, if you do not provide any of the requested information, we may not be able to process your request for a payroll deduction. If you are making a one-time, lump-sum gift and, therefore, not using the payroll deduction method of payment, you are not required to furnish your SSN.

Individuals may pledge online at [opm.gov/ShowSomeLoveCFC](http://opm.gov/ShowSomeLoveCFC) and may contact the CFC Help Desk at 888-232-4935 (Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. CST) with questions about the pledge process.

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Federal employees

### WHAT /

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and volunteer in support of  
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### WHEN /

Fall 2017



# Thank you

for participating in the  
2017 CFC!

The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) makes it easy to *Show Some Love* to your favorite causes. Whether you care about veterans services, disaster relief, cancer research, or wildlife preservation, the CFC has a charity for any cause you want to support.

The benefits of the CFC include:

1. You can **give to multiple charities at once** through a program that is federally regulated and fully audited.
2. Payroll deduction allows you to **give a little each pay period**, adding up to a significant gift at the end of the year.
3. Charities love the CFC because it **keeps fundraising costs low**, and the funds are unrestricted. They depend on these funds to have an impact on the communities they serve.
4. The campaign **has a collective impact**, allowing you to join with your co-workers to support those in need locally, nationally, and internationally.
5. New this year, you can **further your impact by volunteering** for the charities of your choice through the CFC.

To give online, pledge at  
<http://cfc-hawaii.org>

Payroll Deductions **DONATE**  
Below are some common pledge amounts per pay period:

<b>CIVILIAN</b>	<b>MILITARY</b>
\$50 x 26 = \$1,300	\$100 x 12 = \$1,200
\$25 x 26 = \$650	\$50 x 12 = \$600
\$10 x 26 = \$260	\$10 x 12 = \$120

Eagle & Super Eagle Awards  
Eagle = \$250 - \$500  
Super Eagle = \$500 Plus

Pledge Form Submission  
Submit your completed paper Pledge Form and payment (if applicable) to your Key Person, Agency or Unit Project Manager or mail directly to:  
CFC Processing Center, P.O. BOX 7820  
Madison, WI 53707-7820.

Questions about making your pledge? Contact customer support at 888-232-4935 or <https://cfcgiving.opm.gov/contact>



Please fill in with red or black ink  
Online pledges are accepted through 01/12/2018 by  
visiting [opm.gov/ShowSomeLoveCFC](http://opm.gov/ShowSomeLoveCFC)

All Paper Pledge Forms should be mailed to: CFC Processing  
Center, P.O. BOX 7820 Madison, WI 53707-7820 and must be  
must be post marked by 01/12/2018

**FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ONLY**

Primary Email Address		Secondary Email Address			
First Name		Last Name			
Your Department	Your Agency	Your Office			
Donor Type	Work Zip Code				
<input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Civilian <input type="checkbox"/> Postal		<input type="checkbox"/> I'm located in a foreign territory without a ZIP Code			
Home Address	City	State	Zip Code	SSN	Required if electing Payroll

DESIGNATED PLEDGE: To designate to one or more Charities or Federated groups, fill in the Charity code(s) and dollar amounts above. If you would like to donate to more than 5 Charities, please visit [opm.gov/ShowSomeLoveCFC](http://opm.gov/ShowSomeLoveCFC) to complete an online donation or attach another copy of this form and label your forms 1 of X; 2 of X. The Total Annual Contribution amount should appear on copy 1 of X.

Allotment Source	Per Deduction Amount	Interval	CFC Charity Code	Annual Amount	Volunteer Time
<input type="checkbox"/> Payroll	\$	<input type="checkbox"/> Monthly x12 <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-Monthly x24 <input type="checkbox"/> Bi-Weekly x26		\$	XX HOURS
<input type="checkbox"/> Check	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> One Time		\$	XX HOURS
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# DECEMBER PROMOTIONS



## Technical Sergeant

**Romy J. Mauricio**  
*169 ADS*

**Samart J. Bradford**  
*201 IS*

**Benjamin M. Luna**  
*201 IS*

**Shaun A. Neizmen**  
*154 MOF*

**William G. Barut**  
*292 CBCS*



## Staff Sergeant

**Brentin H. James**  
*154 MXS*

**Christopher K. Brun**  
*292 CBCS*

**Anamarissa I. Pasion**  
*292 CBCS*

**Keshia K. Combis**  
*291 CBCS*

**Kaponopomaikaiolani  
Kukona**  
*154 FSS*

**Samuel JR. J. Yarbrough**  
*154 FSS*

**Debra T. Toilolo**  
*154 FSS*