



**US Army Corps
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Army Corps Graduates First Class of UXO Technicians

Honolulu District Public Affairs

(FT. SHAFTER, HI - NR-23-06) Fourteen Island of Hawaii residents recently graduated as level one unexploded ordnance technicians from the first-ever certified ordnance safety program class sponsored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Honolulu District held at Hawaii Community College in Hilo.

“The course was presented through a validated Department of Defense facility jointly developed by our Waikoloa contractor, American Technology Inc (ATI) and the University of Tennessee,” said Honolulu District Waikoloa FUDS Project Manager Charles F. Streck Jr.

All participants receive academic credit for the class through the University of Tennessee.

“We had great cooperative partnering from the Hawaii Community College/University of Hawaii system, Parker Ranch and Strategic Solutions Inc., a non-profit Native Hawaiian advocacy group,” Streck said.

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2-2-2 UXO TECH

The training is paid for and sponsored through the Formerly Used Defense Sites (FUDS) program, administered by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Secretary of the Army's office. The training was presented as part of the institutional control program for the FUDS Former Waikoloa Maneuver Area project as a means to increase public awareness and sensitivity to the potential health and safety risks from unexploded ordnance on the Island of Hawaii and the Waikoloa-Waimea area specifically.

The six-week certified unexploded ordnance safety program results in students becoming certified level one unexploded ordnance technicians. Participants were encouraged to disseminate all that they had learned during the class with their families and local communities in order to heighten public awareness and safety.

Before the current course was offered, training was only available at two certified ordnance safety programs located at Texas A&M University and the University of Tennessee. Because of the cost and time investment required, few local residents who expressed an interest in the UXO course had been able to attend. All graduates, if they choose, receive a certificate qualifying them to function as a UXO Tech I for unexploded ordnance projects.

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3-3-3 UXO TECH

The certification provides a journeyman-like status which qualifies a person to work on UXO projects, but provides no management-decision making authority. The class instruction program, however, was oriented towards satisfying the personal interest of local community members whether they wanted to use the education for vocational purposes or not. If people choose to continue this work as a vocation they can build up experience and expertise for advancement to UXO Tech job categories II & III, which affords management-decision making functions.

“Local training provided Hawaii residents an alternative from the associated travel costs and family separation and a somewhat expensive \$15,000, six-week training at Texas A&M University or the University of Tennessee,” said Clayton Sugimoto from Wil-Chee Associates, the primary contractor for organizing the training. “We were able to work with our local partners and ATI-UT in order to hold the training entirely on the Big Island, so lessening effects of absence on those participants with families and other urgent demands.”

The first class of UXO technicians is representative of a diverse local community including members of a variety of local ethnic communities including a large number of Native Hawaiians. Ages spanned from 19 to over 60 years. Graduates included a former fire chief from Waikoloa, a representative from the Hawaii County Police Dept. and Fire Dept.; homemakers; representatives from Native Hawaiian organizations; a small business owner and an airport security officer.