



**US Army Corps
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Corps of Engineers Civilian Volunteers to Return to Afghanistan to Finish Mission

By Lacey Justinger, Honolulu District Public Affairs

(FORT SHAFTER, HI NR 04-10) Tim Inouye had just one question after six months of working 12 hour days, seven days a week as an engineer technician for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in Afghanistan.

“My first thought back on the island was ‘is McDonalds open?’” He said. “Over there, you don’t have all the creature comforts of home; and a plate lunch, that’s just not available anywhere.”

Inouye is a USACE civilian from the Honolulu District, and will return to Bagram, Afghanistan, in a few weeks on another six-month deployment to continue work on the projects he started during his last rotation.

According to Inouye, a project in Hawaii might take years to complete, but in Afghanistan, the projects are fast-tracked to finish and turn over to the troops or to support the troops.

The main mission of the Corps is to support the Soldiers and to win the hearts and minds of the Afghanistan people so they will be able to take control and make a better life for themselves, he added.

“Green Suitors are the stars and we’re there to support them,” he said. “The friendships that you make with the Soldiers, Afghans, Corps employees and third-country nationals are life-long relationships.”

Although the days are long, run the gauntlet of extreme temperatures and the air has a ‘unique smell’, Inouye said that an Afghanistan deployment is not as bad of a tour as people often think it is, otherwise he would not be going back.

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“The pace is faster and it’s not for everyone,” he added. “It takes a certain type of individual to survive an Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) deployment; someone with an open mind, who can stay focused and not let the things out of their control get to them.”

The daily challenges and inherent pace of the OCO deployment make the six months go by in a snap of the fingers, and before you know it, you are getting back on the plane to come home, said Inouye.

“The thing I enjoyed the most about my Afghanistan deployment was that everyday was different out there; there were new challenges that kept it fresh,” he said.

Inouye challenges those with adventurous spirits to volunteer for an OCO deployment. It’s an opportunity to explore new cultures and interact with people from different parts of the country and the world.

“It’s a once-in-a-lifetime chance to broaden your horizons, and I am doing it twice,” he said.

For additional information about USACE career opportunities in Iraq and Afghanistan visit <http://cpolwapp.belvoir.army.mil/coe-gwot/> or choose COE GWOT from the special programs options at <https://cpolwapp.belvoir.army.mil/public/vabSelfNom/index.jsp>. The Honolulu District provides family and deployment support for any federal employee in Hawaii who volunteers to deploy in support of an USACE OCO mission.

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Afghanistan civilian: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Honolulu District civilian Tim Inouye redeployed from the Afghanistan Engineer District in December and volunteered to return in a few weeks.

Afghanistan group: Tim Inouye (back row left) stands with his Overseas Contingency Operations training group at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Deployment Center in Winchester, Va.