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Army, Corps Open New Soldier Barracks at Fort Shafter

By Joseph Bonfiglio, Honolulu District Public Affairs

(FORT SHAFTER, HI - NR 13-10) Officials from the U.S. Army Pacific, the U.S.

Army Garrison-Hawaii, the Corps of Engineers and Nan, Inc. gathered for a maile lei untying ceremony to open Fort Shafter's newest Soldiers' barracks Thursday.

According to USARPAC Commander, Lt. Gen. Benjamin Mixon, "I don't have to tell you the demands that have been placed on our force across the military and specifically here in the United States Army Pacific over the last nine plus years."

"We have had on average anywhere from 10,000 to 25,000 Soldiers deployed to Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Philippines. What better way to take care of our Soldiers than to have great living facilities when they return back to their home station," he said.

"This newly completed living space ... is a home to our Soldiers when they're not deployed. And so as you look behind me ... you see this great improvement to quality of life that was implemented in the 2004 Army Barracks Master Plan where the motto was *Quality facilities for Quality Soldiers*. This is a shining example of how important our Soldiers are to each and every one of us and to the nation," Mixon said.

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“This facility will go a long way to meeting those objectives to provide those Soldiers with the amount of space and the ability to live comfortably in this environment ... it’s a far cry from the old hammerhead barracks at Fort Bragg and even the wooden WWII barracks that my Soldiers lived in when I was a lieutenant 35 years ago,” Mixon said.

“Since we are still a nation at war, we cannot over emphasize the importance of our efforts to deliver high-quality housing for our Soldiers,” said Honolulu District Commander Lt. Col. Jon J. Chytka at the ceremony. “This supports our Soldiers’ morale, and we take it very seriously.”

“This project has been an achievement in teamwork from initial planning to construction and now to maile lei untying – and it was all possible because of the flexible and determined folks of the Garrison, the end-user commands, the Honolulu District and the design-build team of Nan, Inc.,” Chytka said.

“Our Fort Shafter Barracks project team has delivered on their promise to strive for excellence. Together we’ve partnered to create this \$27 million state-of-the-art six-story barracks complex,” Chytka said. “Our task was to design and construct a barracks; a lighted paved parking lot, concrete walks, covered bike racks and motorcycle shed smack dab in the center of most of the senior Army Commands in Hawaii. As a team we focused on communications, quality, sustainability and safety with great success... and we finished the work two and a half months early.”

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“I believe this project was a model for contracting sessions between the government and construction companies,” said Stan Sagum, project manager for Nan Inc. “Our team has a lot of experience working together on construction.”

“The partnering effort between the Corps and Nan Inc. kept the project 15-percent ahead of schedule, with no accidents,” Sagum said.

The six-story barracks complex will house approximately 156 single Soldiers in 78 room units. Two Soldiers will occupy each unit with two separate bedrooms, a shared bath and kitchen. The barracks have central air conditioning with individual controls in each room.

The barracks also has a special, Duroplex wall paint interior finish that is more resilient to wear-and-tear and it is moisture resistant and mold proof. Additional improvements include solid interior doors, 9-foot ceilings, solid surface kitchen countertops and 30-inch range ovens. Of special importance, the Barracks is environmentally friendly and will consume 30 percent less energy than older barracks.

According to Chytka, “Nan, Inc. is pursuing LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold certification. Currently, they have sufficient points to have the new facility certifiable for LEED Silver as required by contract, but we highly encourage them to go for the Gold and make this outstanding project, the LEED flag ship for U.S. Army Garrison-Hawaii which emphasizes all of our desires to be good stewards of tax dollars and the environment.”

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The construction industry and the Army use LEED as a system to rate the green standards in construction.

Paul Choy, project engineer for the Corps, said the building was designed to match the motif of the buildings around it, like the Fort Shafter Community Theater and Building 520.

“The significance of these kinds of projects is that they are keeping the Army’s commitment and the Army’s promise to Soldiers to improve their living conditions and provide them a quality of life that is commensurate with the service and sacrifices that they make for our country,” said USAG-HI Deputy Commander Jim Duttweiler.

“Over ten years ago the Army committed to take us from squad bays and multi-Soldier bedrooms with large shared latrines into a private room with a shared bathroom with just one other Soldier. This project brings us on to about 85% of the way for the Army in Hawaii,” Duttweiler said

“Our Soldiers are worth it, they certainly deserve a great place to live and I thank all of you that were involved from the planning, to the building, to now the housing and the furnishing and the opening of this great facility,” Mixon said.

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Editor’s note: Work began in Oct. 2008 with a traditional Hawaiian blessing and groundbreaking ceremony on the former Favreau (baseball) Field at Fort Shafter. That field was named for Cpl. Arthur A. Favreau of Woonsocket, R.I. who died of wounds

suffered when a five-inch naval antiaircraft shell struck his barracks at Fort Shafter and exploded in the early morning of Dec. 7, 1941 during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

Favreau was a member of Battery E, 64th Coast Artillery Regiment (Anti-Aircraft), and is interred in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Punchbowl in Honolulu.

The 64th artillery regiment was the major unit at Fort Shafter from 1922 to 1942, and had gun crews deployed on Dec. 7, 1941 that were able to directly assist in the close-in defense of Pearl Harbor during the attack.

Favreau's unit was not involved in immediate response to the attack. He was detailed to unlock the small arms room in a barracks and was performing this duty when he was mortally wounded.

Favreau was recognized June 7, 2004 at Fort Shafter for his sacrifice when a newly renovated barracks facility by the Corps of Engineers near the ball field was rededicated in his honor.

A plaque mounted by the elevator in "Favreau Hall" recounts the story of a simple man who gave his life fulfilling his duty to the nation and his fellow Soldiers.