Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan

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Vol. LXII, No. 40 www.cnic.navy.mil/yokosuka Oct. 14, 2011

# Yokosuka base employee named DoD Firefighter of the Year

**Story and photo by Jeffrey C. Doepp, CFAY Public Affairs**

Commander Navy Region Japan (CNRJ) Firefighter Takeshi Innami was announced as the top firefighter in his field in the worldwide Department of Defense (DoD) Civilian Firefighter of the Year competition for 2010.

The DoD Civilian Firefighter of the Year award competition is highly competitive as it includes nominees from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Defense Logistics Agency and the Coast Guard. It is based on a combination of categories, including leadership skills, job performance, and community service and involvement.

According to Yokosuka base Fire Chief Dan Vogel, Innami's nomination was a result of all of his exceptional and professional work on and off the job.

"His commitment to excellence has paid immeasurable dividends to the Yokosuka base community," said Vogel. "The importance of this award is that it recognizes his skills, talents and accomplishments in any given year and reflects his value to the organization that nominated him."

**CNRJ Firefighter Takeshi Innami performs a general maintance check on firefighting gear Sept. 28. Innami was announced as the top firefighter in his field in the worldwide DoD Civilian Firefighter of the Year competition for 2010.**

Innami, who is a Japanese Master Labor Contract (MLC) employee, was selected for the CNRJ Firefighter of the Year award and the Department of the Navy Civilian Firefighter of the Year award prior to being nominated for the DoD award, competed against several thousand highly-skilled civilian firefighters throughout the DoD.

"The fact that Innami competed and was selected at the highest possible level demonstrates to the command, region, Navy and the local community that CNRJ Regional Fire Department is represented by diligent, talented, well-trained and highly effective fire and emergency service professionals," Vogel said.

The annual award recognizes superior job performance and outstanding contributions to the fire service, with specific focus for on and off duty related contributions to the fire and emergency services program.

"He is the 'go-to guy' in respiratory protection for all of Navy Region Japan and a leader in the local community, as he is a licensed civil defense rescue team leader through the Yokohama City Fire Bureau," Vogel added. "And, as a MLC union representative voice for more than 430 firefighter members Japanwide, Innami is well respected among his peers!"

Innami is assigned to a fire engine crew as a driver and an operator of the pumping equipment that provides water to the hose lines at a fire scene.

His daily job involves checking his vehicle and equipment for operability, participating in drills and training sessions, station facility upkeep duties and equipment maintenance and documentation.

"I'm deeply honored to be recognized by the Regional Fire Department and the Department of Defense," said Innami. "I am just one of many firefighters doing my job, many others could also be recognized. We do not work for recognition but if we do a good job every day, sometimes we are specially thanked for our efforts."

According to Innami, being selected as the top firefighter for this highly prestigious award among DoD civilian firefighters around the world cannot be attributed to any one individual but to a team effort.

"My co-workers deserve credit for our success because we are all one team and I was just lucky to be chosen for this award," Innami added.

Innami, who received his award in August, will be recognized by the region during an event to be held in October.

# *George Washington* Sailors celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month

**By ABE3 Sandip K. Dhesi,**
***USS George Washington* Public Affairs**

SOUTH CHINA SEA – Sailors aboard the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) held a Hispanic Heritage Month celebration for the ship's crew Oct. 7.

The celebration was coordinated by *George Washington*'s heritage committee and included a performance by a mariachi singer and several speeches highlighting the contributions made by Hispanic-American culture.

The event began with a prayer led by Roman Catholic chaplain Lt. Cmdr. Jose Pimentel, a native of Azores, Portugal.

"We come from different places and different cultures and speak different languages," said Pimentel. "We bring many different gifts and talents that enhance and strengthen the light of the new unity we share. Today we celebrate, in a very special way, our brothers and sisters who share their Hispanic heritage with us."

After the prayer, several Sailors of Hispanic descent spoke about what their heritage means to them.

"Being Hispanic in the military is very important to me because a lot of people come from smaller towns so they don't get to meet the different types of Hispanics that are out there," said Aviation Maintenance Administrationman 2nd Class Emily Delaguila from Miami. "Not every Hispanic is Mexican, not every Hispanic is Puerto Rican, so I'm very proud to be able to speak about where I'm from," continued Delaguila whose family moved to Southern Florida from Colombia.

As the event's keynote speaker Cmdr. Eduardo Morales, *George Washington*'s gun boss, spoke about the significant contributions of Hispanic Americans.

"This time-honored event allows us to take a moment to honor and observe the dedication, contributions and sacrifices that the Hispanic community, both military and civilian, have provided and endured," said Morales. "From those who traced their roots to America's earliest days, to those who just recently came to the U.S. carrying nothing but the hope of a better life, Hispanics have always been an integral part of our national story."

**YNC Luis Lujan from Andrews, Texas, attached to Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron 14, performs a mariachi song during a Hispanic Heritage Month celebration held aboard the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) Oct. 7. Each year, the United States observes Hispanic Heritage Month from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 by celebrating the cultures and contributions of Americans whose ancestors came from the Caribbean, Mexico, Spain, and South and Central America.**
**U.S. Navy photo by MC2 William Pittman**

Morales discussed the accomplishments of several of the earliest Hispanic Americans and their contributions to our history; people like Cesar Chavez, Guadalupe Hidalgo and Adm. David Glasgow Farragut. Then Morales took his speech in the opposite direction on the timeline.

*see **"HISPANIC HERITAGE"** pg. 8*

## INSIDE

### MCPON kicks off phase one of CPO 365 in Japan

**Chief petty officers and first class petty officers joined Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (SS/SW) Rick D. West for a 2-mile physical training run at CFAY Oct. 4.**

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### Awards for children, fire prevention training for all

**Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka held an opening ceremony for Fire Prevention month Oct. 3 on the red brick area outside the commissary.**

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