

Navy Region Hawaii, Sailors emphasize SAAM during April events

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Navy Region Hawaii and Sailors participated in a series of events in April to emphasize the importance of Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM).

Capt. Mark S. Manfredi, chief of staff for Navy Region Hawaii, signed a proclamation at the beginning of the month to kick off the campaign. The theme for this year's SAAM is "Live Our Values: Step Up and Stop Sexual Assault."

Sailors from Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 303 participated in the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes event April 9 at the University of Hawaii West Oahu Campus. Photo courtesy of the University of Hawaii West Oahu Campus



Military members from all services and civilians took part in the fourth annual Sexual Assault Awareness Ryde on April 19 sponsored by Oahu Ruff Ryders and Navy Region Hawaii SAPR Team. Photo courtesy of Oahu Ruff Ryders



The Navy Region Hawaii Sexual Assault Prevention and Response office and unit victim advocates sponsored a canned-food drive at the Pearl Harbor Commissary in April. Photo courtesy of the Navy Region Hawaii SAPR office



"We are making progress, raising awareness and demonstrating success in prevention," Manfredi stated.

In addition, Sailors from Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 303 (CBMU 303) recognized the need for sexual assault awareness by taking a stand against sexual assault, abuse and violence on April 9 at the University of Hawaii West Oahu Campus. The service members participated in the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes event, aimed at getting men involved with the fight by encouraging men to have empathy by walking a mile in women's shoes.

"This is a crime that is not gender-specific, but impacts all of us because trust is broken and the mission is harmed," said Construction Electrician 1st Class Michael Walden.

Navy Region Hawaii sponsored several other events in April, including a total confidentiality forum at the Silver Dolphin Bistro.

The Chaplain Corps and Navy Region Hawaii Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) office personnel teamed up to spread the word that "Chaplains Equal Total Confidentiality" while enjoying a menu of comfort food prepared by the Silver Dolphin Bistro staff. Patrons were also treated to a message-

filled chocolate fortune cookie advertising the SAPR hotline numbers.

SAPR personnel continued their efforts to raise awareness with the community at large by joining forces with the University of Hawaii at Manoa for a resource fair. The fair, called "Breaking the Silence," showcased organizations from the university, local community and the Navy to educate college students on resources and prevention efforts that are available regarding sexual assault.

The Navy Region Hawaii SAPR office and unit victim advocates also sponsored a canned-food drive in April at the Pearl Harbor Commissary. SAPR personnel distributed 600 Department of Defense Safe Help Line grocery bags to the patrons while educating shoppers on awareness and prevention efforts.

The event generated four hundred pounds of non-perishable items and collected more than \$170, which was donated to the Armed Services YMCA to benefit military families.

On April 19, military members from all services and civilian riders took part in the fourth annual Sexual Assault Awareness Ride sponsored by Oahu Ruff Ryders and Navy Region Hawaii SAPR Team.

The event consisted of 150 motorcyclists' from various clubs rallying against the traumatic impacts that sexual assault have within our military communities. The ride kicked off at Montgomery Powersports and ended at Keehi Lagoon with a barbecue lunch and SAPR presentation.

"We are each other's brothers' and sisters' keepers and together we can make a difference," said Navy Region Hawaii SAPR office member Terilynn Brannon.

Several riders said the event has become meaningful for them because sexual assault has a ripple effect and most people know someone who has been assaulted or personally affected by it.

The Oahu Ruff Ryders chapter was established in 2006 and is the largest sport bike club on Oahu.

The Oahu Ruff Ryders will donate all proceeds from the event to the Sex Abuse Treatment Center in Honolulu.

For more information about SAPR, call 474-1999.