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Keiki Get A Head Start On Fun

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Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Public Affairs



Members of Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii hosted a holiday party for 100 underprivileged local children Dec. 16 at the Makai Recreation Center here.

Children enrolled in the Oahu Head Start Program were treated to a morning of fun to brighten up their holiday season.

The event was led by Senior Master Sgt. Kimberly J. Lester, operations superintendent, 17th Operational Weather Squadron.

“Due to various things, a few weeks ago, it didn’t look like putting on the party was possible, but there was no way this year’s committee and I would let that happen,” said Lester. “I love helping kids.”

Volunteers from the joint base community came together, and with the help of donations, were able to provide games, gifts, school supplies and entertainment for the children.

Glen B. Bailey, chief, Support Agreements, 15th Plans and Programs, started the party with a magic show, allowing a few lucky keiki to participate in the performance.

The games began following Bailey’s magic. Kids got to go fishing for gifts, play baseball toss, bean bag toss and have their faces painted. After the games, there was a surprise visit from Santa, who arrived on a fire truck. The kids then took a lunch break followed by dance time. Santa went into his bag and provided gifts to each child before they departed the base.

The Oahu Head Start Program is designed to assist low-income families with their children’s education. Children in the program gain increased social competence, are more likely to graduate from high school and are less likely to become involved in substance abuse.

“Annually, in the spirit of embracing the local community, we have invited 100 of the program’s children to spend the day with us,” Lester said. “Words can’t express how I felt seeing the smiles on the faces of the children, teachers and program coordinators. What we did will always be remembered by some of those children. That’s what we are about: making a positive difference in the community in which we live.”
