Military in Hawai‘i
By David Carey

I have had the great privilege of serving as the Chair of the Military Affairs Council of the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii (the MAC) on and off for over ten years.

The MAC has played a key role in supporting the military investment in Hawai‘i by the federal government. Most people don’t realize that the military is the second largest “industry” in Hawai‘i behind tourism.

A recent study sponsored by the MAC and prepared by the RAND Corporation found that the average military expenditures averaged $6.5 billion (using 2007-2009 data) that resulted in a total annual output of $12.2 billion to Hawai‘i’s economy. This expenditure supported over 100,000 jobs, or 16.5% of Hawai‘i’s total jobs. The direct and indirect effect of military spending compounds quickly. For example, in the professional, scientific and technical services category, defense spending runs in excess of $500 million—which is 16% of the sector—while supporting 43% of its jobs.

For more than the past decade, military spending has been steadier than tourism and touches many aspects of life in Hawai‘i.

Hawai‘i is unique in that all of the senior command positions for the Pacific are located in the state: Headquarters for the overall Pacific Command, the Pacific Fleet, the Army Pacific, Marine Forces Pacific and the Pacific Air Forces. Each command is headed by a 4-star admiral or general and is supported by very sophisticated headquarter operations and staffs.

Military components are some of Hawai‘i’s biggest employers. The Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard is the largest industrial employer in the State with about 4,000 people in highly paid technical jobs and plays a vital strategic role for the US Navy in the Pacific. The shipyard also provides services from other private maritime carriers as well.

The US Army has a major outpost in Hawai‘i based primarily at Schofield Barracks in central O‘ahu. In addition to active army personnel, there are many highly skilled technical positions that support the advanced 2014 U.S. Army, Pacific “Spirit of the Warrior” Award
By David Carey

Friday the 13th was not a bad day at all! I was honored and privileged to receive the 2014 U.S. Army, Pacific, Mana O Ke Koa “Spirit of the Warrior” award on behalf of Outrigger Enterprises Group.

This award recognizes active community leaders who embody the “Warrior Ethos” (Soldier’s Creed) and was presented at the U.S. Army Pacific Birthday Commemoration at the Hilton Hawaiian Village. The event was hosted by General Vincent K. Brooks, Commanding General, U.S. Army Pacific, with a room full of uniformed military and community leaders from across the Pacific in attendance.

Former recipients of the award include:

2007 Mr. Bill Paty
2008 Ms. Pasha Baker
2009 Governor Linda Lingle
2010 Mr. Ken Bailey
2011 Ms. Carole Kai
2012 Mr. Albert Silva

Mrs. and General Vincent K. Brooks and David and Kathy Carey

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technology utilized by the troops when they go down range to Southwest Asia.

The Marine forces in the Pacific also have a big footprint in Hawai'i, most notably the Marine Corps Base Hawai'i located in Kāne'ohe. The Kāne'ohe base has been a model for energy conservation and sustainability in the US Military.

The Pacific Air Forces at Hickam shares runways with Honolulu International Airport. Hawai'i is fortunate to be part of the “highway in the sky” with a regular team of tankers and transport planes passing through our State. We are additionally privileged to have an F-22 squadron based at Hickam and shared with our Hawai'i Air National Guard and to be able to host many crews as they pass through Hawai'i.

In addition to the huge job contributions of the military, they have been an important part of our communities. They support our schools, non-profit organizations and are here to help when we have a natural disaster.

Every two years, we are excited to welcome RIMPAC (the Rim of the Pacific Exercise) to the Islands—this year from June 26 to August 1. This is the 24th in the series that began in 1971 during the Vietnam War and will include 23 nations, 49 surface ships, 6 submarines, more than 200 aircraft and 25,000 personnel.

RIMPAC’s economic impact on Hawai'i is significant and widespread but difficult to measure. For Outrigger, we are delighted to welcome RIMPAC participants who may also enjoy shore leave in Waikiki or check out a neighbor island. It’s great exposure and likely some of them will be back again someday, perhaps with family.

Our Military Liaison Office in Waikiki has been burning the midnight oil trying to accommodate the needs of our servicemen and -women, as well as those visiting from 22 other countries.

For these reasons, and so much more, I support and have worked on the MAC for more than 10 years. I was deeply honored to be recognized for my and Outrigger’s efforts with the military at a recent awards dinner (see article right).

So in the next few weeks our hotels and streets will be filled with sailors wearing a variety of uniforms and speaking foreign languages but a smile and “Aloha” is universally understood as welcome, and we do. “Aloha,” RIMPAC! 

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In my leadership role with Outrigger, I have always felt a duty to use my skills and contacts to give back to our greater community. As a member of the Military Affairs Council of the Chamber of Commerce, I have had the great pleasure to meet many senior flag officers that have devoted their careers to the service of our country. To be able to help our military personnel carry out their duties, to help with the “business of the military,” so to speak, and to have the privilege of ensuring so many of our dedicated men and women enjoy their time in Hawai'i is truly satisfying.

The Soldier’s Creed states, “I am an expert and I am a professional” and I thank our ‘ohana for exemplifying that for our military. I accept the “Warrior Ethos” award on behalf of each one of you.