

BOSS Program Leads Successful Beach Cleanup at Tracks Beach Park

Staff Sgt. Mai Phan Reports 30 Soldiers Participated in the Volunteer Effort on December 16, 2023

WHEELER ARMY AIRFIELD, Hawai'i — On Saturday, December 16, 2023, the Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers (BOSS) program organized a highly successful volunteer beach cleanup at Tracks Beach Park off Farrington Hwy. This event marked a continued effort by the BOSS program to give back to the community and foster camaraderie among single Soldiers stationed on Oahu.

Tracks Beach Park, a familiar location for previous BOSS events, hosted about 30 dedicated Soldiers who came together to clean up the area. Staff Sgt. Mai Phan, the driving force behind these initiatives, had made it a priority to visit a variety of beaches across the island, providing volunteers with a unique opportunity to explore various scenic spots while contributing to their community.

During the cleanup, participants focused their efforts on areas known for excessive litter, including the beach itself, the parking lot, and surrounding areas. Notably, Tracks Beach Park, also known as Electric Beach since it is across the highway from the power plant, faced challenges associated with homelessness, resulting in an accumulation of trash in the vicinity. BOSS volunteers were committed to helping maintain the cleanliness of these crucial public spaces.

Unlike formal contractual agreements, BOSS volunteer activities operated on a flexible schedule. The program actively disseminated information about upcoming events through various channels, including Facebook and WhatsApp group chats. Soldiers interested in participating were encouraged to coordinate with BOSS organizers to arrange transportation to the designated cleanup sites.

Staff Sgt. Mai Phan emphasized that these volunteer efforts were essential for encouraging soldiers to step out of their barracks and engage with the local community. The program offered a sense of purpose, preventing feelings of isolation and promoting mental well-being among service members.

Through BOSS, soldiers had the opportunity to make a tangible impact on their surroundings while creating lasting bonds with fellow volunteers. The appreciation expressed by the local community members during the December 16th cleanup further reinforced the value of these collective efforts.

Phan expressed her enthusiasm for BOSS's mission, stating, "We're not just cleaning up the beaches; we're fostering connections and providing soldiers with a purpose outside their daily routines. It's about experiencing the beauty of our island while giving back to the community that supports us."

BOSS organizers were actively planning a schedule of events for 2024, with the aim of continuing to engage soldiers and strengthen their ties to the Hawaiian community.