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HAWAI'I ISLAND GIRL SCOUTS HOST DISTINGUISHED VISITORS AT CAMP KILOHANA

WAIMEA (DRAFT) – Girl Scouts of Hawai'i leaders and troops hosted nearly 90 guests for a Distinguished Visitors Day on August 17, 2023, to showcase the Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) project team's repairs to the Girl Scouts of Hawai'i's Camp Kilohana on Hawai'i Island.



Members of the IRT project team, GSH Interim CEO Michele Saito and GSH Hawai'i Island Coordinator Chelsea Ahern

IRT is a collaborative program that leverages military contributions and community resources to multiply value and cost savings for participants. Communities typically provide materials and basic services, while military units contribute personnel and training resources. IRT missions produce mission-ready forces, civil-military partnerships and stronger communities. Throughout five two-week rotations, over 200 soldiers from the Air Force, Air National Guard, Army and Marine Reserve units used their skills to update the cabins and facilities at Camp Kilohana.

“The IRT program has allowed us to save an estimated \$850,000 on repairs to Camp Kilohana,” said GSH Interim CEO Michele Saito. “Thanks to the Department of Defense and the amazing work of members from the U.S. Military, our camp facilities are better than ever before. We now have a newly-fixed campsite that will benefit girl scouts throughout the Hawai'i Island community as well as the entire state.”



Chief Guy Travis and Captain Esteban Acevedo detail cabin updates to distinguished visitors on a tour of the newly-repaired Camp Kilohana on Hawai'i Island

Distinguished visitors in attendance included Col. Koklonaris (IRT Deputy Director), CMSgt. Kenneth Bennett (Air Force), Lt. Col. Steven Johnson (Air Force), Chief David Abildgaard (Air Natl. Guard/Air Force) and Col. Leah Boling (Air Natl. Guard Chaplain Corps). The day began with a project briefing at the Kona Elks Lodge, followed by a tour and lunch at Camp Kilohana.

The 6.83-acre camp is located on Saddle Road, 10 miles from the Waimea side junction and 44 miles from Hilo. At an elevation of 6,000 feet, this site experiences a variety of weather conditions and is a perfect spot for meetings, retreats, stargazing or studying nature. For more information on GSH's camping sites, visit www.gshawaii.org/en/stem-center/Camp.html.

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Link to photos available for download and use:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1cO7AEXqS5iVW9Jdoirnujw3ens-cY7Sa?usp=sharing>

About Girl Scouts of Hawai'i

Supporting over 5,000 girl and adult members statewide, Girl Scouts of Hawai'i (GSH) builds girls of courage, confidence, and character to make the world a better place. GSH's headquarters is located on the island of O'ahu, with three neighbor island service centers on the islands of Hawai'i, Kaua'i and Maui. GSH is chartered by the national office, Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) and is responsible for the leadership, administration and supervision of Girl Scout programs in the state of Hawai'i. For more information about GSH, visit www.gshawaii.org or call (808) 595-8400.

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