

# Tripler Army Medical Center

## Public Affairs Office Media Release

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For Immediate Release

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## Tripler's Blood Donor Center faces increased demand and smaller donor pool

### Tripler Army Medical Center Public Affairs Office

HONOLULU—While the demand for blood has increased, Tripler Army Medical Center's Blood Donor Center has a smaller donor pool to work with, according to Capt. Michael Bukovitz, its director. The center is now conducting an awareness campaign to increase its donor pool on Oahu.

“We highly encourage service members, retirees, military family members, and Department of Defense civilian employees to donate, and to donate more often,” Bukovitz said.

Demand has increased, because medical advances have increased the kinds and frequency of lifesaving procedures which require more blood supplies. Ongoing military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan are also straining the Armed Services Blood Program, of which Tripler is one of 24 centers worldwide. Service members wounded and injured in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan) now receive about 355 units of blood a week from the Armed Services Blood Program.

What's not well known is that since the Vietnam War, the U.S. Armed Services have relied solely

on the Armed Services Blood Program for their blood needs. Hawaii's location in the middle of the Pacific also creates a unique challenge. Because blood is perishable, the Tripler program cannot make up shortages by relying on other military blood donation centers on the mainland that are too many miles and hours away. Tripler also doesn't rely on the well-known Blood Bank of Hawaii program.

For more information on how to donate, call the Tripler blood donor center at 433-6195.

## Some Cold Facts about Warm Blood

**To donate blood, contact the Tripler Army Medical Center Blood Donor Center:**

**Tel: 433-6195**

**Location:** Tripler 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, A Wing, Room 2A207. Call for information about locations and times at other military installations on Oahu.

**Hours of Operation:** 8 a.m. – 2 p.m.

**Website:** Go to: [www.tamc.amedd.army.mil](http://www.tamc.amedd.army.mil) and click on “Blood Donor Center”

**The military blood donor pool has shrunk.** Over 43 percent of career military personnel cannot now donate.

- Military donors stationed in Europe in the 1980s and early 1990s are ineligible because of the possibility of transmitting a variant Creutzfeldt-Jacob disease (Mad Cow Disease).
- Current deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan have narrowed the donor pool while increasing demand.
- To make up for ineligible donors, other donations must increase by 33 percent.

**Tripler’s Blood Donor Center is a joint service program.** Its major contributors represent all the services: the Army (39 percent), Navy (27 percent), Air Force (22 percent), Marine Corps (8 percent) and Coast Guard (4 percent).

### Who needs donated blood?

- Trauma victims may use 40+ units of blood.
- Leukemia patients may use up to eight units of platelets during treatment.
- Premature infants can be sustained for up to two weeks by a single pint of blood.

by Leslie Ozawa

### **Quality of Human Being Award**

At a recognition ceremony Jan. 14, Sgt. 1st Class Scott Belzer of Tripler Army Medical Center (at right) was one of 14 platelet donors and 38 whole blood donors honored by Tripler's Commanding General Maj. Gen. Gale S. Pollock. Pollock told the donors that as a nurse anesthetist, she had the privilege to personally watch how their precious gift gave life to patients in the operating room. "The fact that you so willingly do this and take the time from other things important to you, speaks to the quality of human beings you are," Pollock said.

by Leslie Ozawa

### **A Giver Who Keeps Giving**

David Trojan is assisted by Tripler Army Medical Center Blood Donor Center's Racquel Duran, in making another blood donation after being honored by Tripler's Commanding General Maj. Gen. Gale S. Pollock at a recognition ceremony Jan. 14. Trojan, a civilian working at Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe, has donated four pints of blood in the past year.

by Leslie Ozawa

### **Quality of Human Being Award**

At a recognition ceremony Jan. 14, Petty Officer 1st Class Michael E. Flores of Naval Submarine Training Center Pacific (at right) was one of 14 platelet donors and 38 whole blood donors honored by Tripler's Commanding General Maj. Gen. Gale S. Pollock. Pollock told the donors that as a nurse anesthetist, she had the privilege to personally watch how their precious gift gave life to patients in the operating room. "The fact that you so willingly do this and take the time from other things important to you, speaks to the quality of human beings you are," Pollock said.

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### **Quality of Human Being Award**

At a recognition ceremony Jan. 14, Tech. Sgt. Joseph A. Adkins of Pacific Air Forces Headquarters (at right) was one of 14 platelet donors and 38 whole blood donors honored by Tripler's Commanding General Maj. Gen. Gale S. Pollock. Pollock told the donors that as a nurse anesthetist, she had the privilege to personally watch how their precious gift gave life to patients in the operating room. "The fact that you so willingly do this and take the time from other things important to you, speaks to the quality of human beings you are," Pollock said.