

Junior enlisted Soldiers Take over Tripler Army Medical Center

By Command Sgt. Maj. William Allen July 8, 2016



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(From left to right) Sgt. Gregory Duque, Sgt. Tamara Miguez and Troop Command Sgt. Maj. William Allen, pose for a picture in front of the "Apple Tree." The Apple Tree fundraiser allows volunteers the opportunity to choose a child's name off the tree and purchase back to school supplies for that child in order to assist those Soldiers who may have large families or need a little help in purchasing the lengthy list of required back to school supplies. *(Photo Credit: Courtesy of the Junior Enlisted Council)*

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HONOLULU -- Tripler Army Medical Center (TAMC) has been taken over by junior enlisted Soldiers; at least in regards to some of the improvements that are being made at TAMC.

The newly formed, Junior Enlisted Council allows Soldiers in the ranks of Pvt. To Sgt. The opportunity to have a voice in what they want to see as changes are made to their organization.

The Junior Enlisted Council serves as an advisor group to Command Sgt. Maj. William Allen, Troop Command's Command Sgt. Maj., on junior enlisted matters. In turn, Allen empowers them through education, communication and developmental opportunities to foster professional development.

The initial idea was brought forward by Sgt. Vanessa Quenga, an Operating Room Specialist assigned as the Alpha Company training room Noncommissioned Officer.

"I just thought this was a great way to showcase the talents of our junior enlisted Soldiers and give them a way to contribute to the organization," said Quenga.

The group's first project was to poll the Soldiers in the barracks and determine what they desired in their new dayroom. Through hard work, ingenuity and using a wide variety of media to advertise their request for input, the Soldiers had made a decision; pool table and televisions.

"Soldiers of all ranks come into the Army with a wide variety of education and life experiences," said Allen. "I believe this is a constructive outlet to allow them to be a part of something bigger than themselves; a way to reinforce the Army Value of selfless service."

The group doesn't just give input on what furniture goes in their barracks, the group has solicited senior NCO's to give classes on a number of subjects and recently set up an "Apple Tree" fundraiser, where volunteers can choose a child's name off the tree and purchase back to school supplies for that child in order to assist those Soldiers who may have large families or need a little help in purchasing the lengthy list of required back to school supplies.

"The junior enlisted are taking over, learning the meaning of Army family and selfless

service and finding imaginative ways to give back to the organization," said Allen. "This takeover though, is a welcome one; TAMC will surely flourish under this coup."