

# News and stories

## Groundbreaking held for Gold Star Monument

Sep 14, 2017

Karen A. Iwamoto | [Hawaii Army Weekly](#)

KANEOHE — As the nation paused to remember the 16th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on Monday, a smaller group gathered at Hawaiian Memorial Park Cemetery, here, to break ground on the site of a future Gold Star Families Memorial Monument.

The monument, to be located at the entrance to the veterans' section of the cemetery, would honor those from Hawaii who died in service to their country. It would also recognize the sacrifice made by their family members.

"As we come together as a nation to remember those 3,000 people who lost their lives on 9/11, we also remember those individuals who lost their lives fighting for our freedom," said the Rev. Wayne Surface, pastor at Ohana Baptist Church and chairman of the Gold Star Families Memorial Monument Committee.

"Those individual losses are just as important as the 3,000 lost on 9/11. The families of those individuals need their own monument," he said.

Judge Ed Kubo, the committee's honorary chairman, quoted from the Book of John in the Bible, reminding those gathered that there

is “no greater love than to lay down one’s life for one’s friends,” which is what the Gold Star Families’ service members had done.

“Many have laid down their lives not just for American values, but for the person on their left and the person on their right,” he added. “We’re here not only to celebrate the lives of those who have given the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms, but to honor their families.”

Hawaii State Rep. Ken Ito, whose district includes Kaneohe and Kailua and who chairs the Committee on Veterans, Military & International Affairs in the State House of Representatives, said Gold Star Families have the full support of the state legislature.

“We may disagree about a lot of things, but when it comes to veterans’ issues there’s no disagreement,” he said.

Cathy Ignacio, a Gold Star spouse and the coordinator of the Survivor Outreach Services Program on Schofield Barracks, said the memorial monument would help Gold Star Families on their journey of healing.

“We want to know our fallen will never be forgotten, no matter how many years go by,” she said. “Thirty years could go by, and this monument will still be here as a physical reminder.”

Gold Star spouse MacKenzie Scobie attended the ceremony with her children, Duke Scobie, 8, and Drew Scobie, 3. She said her family had cremated and scattered the ashes of her late husband, Hawaii Army National Guard Sgt. Drew Michael Scobie, after he died in Afghanistan in 2014.

“With this (monument) my family will have a physical place they can come to remember him,” she said. “And so many more people can come to remember as well. I think that’s a good thing.”

The Hawaii Gold Star Families Memorial Monument is one of 50 being built across the nation. Twenty-one Gold Star Family Memorial Monuments have already been dedicated in 36 states.

Each monument is made of black granite with one side bearing the words, "Gold Star Families Memorial Monument, a tribute to Gold Star Mothers, Fathers, and Relatives who have sacrificed a Loved One for our Freedom."

The other side features four panels that reflect on the following themes: Homeland, Family, Patriot and Sacrifice. At the center of the monument is a cutout of a service member who represents all those who gave their life in service to this country.

The monuments are supported by the Hershel Woody Williams Medal of Honor Foundation, a charitable nonprofit that also provides scholarships to eligible Gold Star Family members. Williams is the sole surviving Marine from World War II to wear the Medal of Honor. He received the medal for displaying "valiant devotion to duty" and service above self as he "enabled his company to reach its objective" during the Battle of Iwo Jima.

### **Support Hawaii's Gold Star Families**