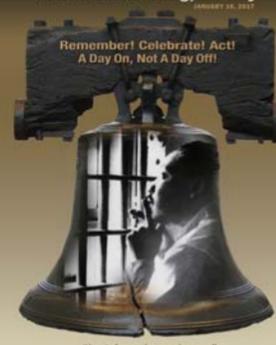




# AMURAI GATE

AIR FORCE - COMMUNITY NEWS

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



Number 10 - Issue 2



## 18th CES firefighters discuss their lives

Airmen 1st Class Edwin Rullan and Javier Gomez, 18th Civil Engineer firefighters, perform an inspection on Kadena's fire response vehicles to ensure emergency readiness.

(U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Nick Emerick)

**By Airman 1st Class Nick Emerick**

18th Wing Public Affairs

1/8/2017 — Firefighters bustle out of their daily training session, going back to their offices, accomplishing personal training and remaining ready at a moment's notice.

The daily life of a firefighter with the 18th Civil Engineer Squadron involves constant vigilance and plenty of training, as the biggest and busiest fire department in the Pacific region for the Air Force, according to Airman 1st Class Javier Gomez, 18th CES firefighter.

Airmen and contractors working at the fire department work 24-hour shifts. Each day begins much the same way, with roll call. Afterwards, inspections occur of personal gear and fire trucks as well as turnover from the last day's shift.

"Most of the time we are training; we have simulated aircraft and structural fires, as well as a flashover trainer, which is a big box allowing us to watch how a fire develops into a flashover and things to be aware of during real fires," said Airman 1st Class Edwin Rullan, 18th CES firefighter. "As firefighters, we have

to maintain our certifications, so accomplishing monthly training is a big part of what we do."

From false alarms to dorm mishaps, the 18th CES fire department is always providing support across the base. The largest part of the job is supporting pilots anytime there is an in-flight emergency, firefighters provide a watchful eye to keep the base populace as safe as possible at all times, according to Gomez.

"Being able to help people is the best part of the job for me, it's the reason I love this job," said Gomez.

Working under conditions such as these build strong relationships within the department, living and working with their team, making sure to be the best they can be. Though the hours may be long, the service provided by these men and women is indispensable. The firefighters of Kadena may not have the most typical lives, but what they do have is a deep and abiding bond, according to Rullan.

"I enjoy the lifestyle, it's not your typical nine-to-five job," said Rullan. "The people you work with become your family."

## 18th EMS guarantees structural integrity of Kadena's aircraft

**By Senior Airman Lynette M. Rolan**

18th Wing Public Affairs

1/10/2017 — Upon walking into the building, the sounds of metalwork reverberate off the walls – the scraping of metal, the drilling of rivets and the movement of large pieces of metal.

The 18th Equipment Maintenance Squadron ensures Kadena's aircraft are structurally sound for future missions.

"If an aircraft is dented, we'll go out there and cut out the damage," said Tech. Sgt. Charles Weber, 18th EMS

aircraft structural maintenance craftsman. "We'll repair it and then we apply top coatings to it, which is your normal aircraft paint."

As the day shift lead, Weber manages 12 Airmen. He emphasizes the importance of connecting with Airmen by helping them with any questions they have to get the mission done.

"Over my 19 years in the Air Force, I have seen great changes in the culture of our Airmen," said Weber. "We have to connect with their generation and help them succeed. Their success not

only depends on our influence, but their own individual drive, what they want to do with their lives and what they want out of their career."

The work performed by aircraft structural maintenance Airmen is vital to keeping aircraft up in the air and mission ready, Weber commented.

"Our shop works on structures for the HH-60G Pave Hawks, KC-135 Stratotankers, E-3 Sentries and other reconnaissance aircraft," said Senior Airman Taylor Dufrene, 18th EMS aircraft structural

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Senior Airman Taylor Dufrene, 18th Equipment Maintenance Squadron aircraft structural maintenance journeyman, begins the rivet removal procedure on a simulated aircraft structure Jan. 9, at Kadena Air Base.



(U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Lynette M. Rolan)