
Pacific Partnership Wraps Up Multi-Mission Stop in Samoa

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Pacific Partnership 2009 departed Samoa July 10, 2009 after working alongside Samoans and other partners and friends, delivering a variety of humanitarian civic assistance programs.

“When we first arrived, our goal was to grow in friendship, learn from one another, and build skills that will allow us all to respond in the event of any future humanitarian crisis,” said Commodore Andrew Cully, Pacific Partnership 2009 Mission Commander, during his speech at the closing ceremony at National Hospital in Apia. “There is no question that we have accomplished that and so much more.”

The Pacific Partnership team during this eleven day visit included military and government personnel from Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States and civilian volunteers from International Aid, Project Hope, University of San Diego Pre-Dental Society, and World Vets who worked alongside their Samoan counterparts. Additionally, Pacific Partnership team members worked with a number of Samoan partners . . . under the Samoa Umbrella for non-governmental organizations (SUNGO), at each of the mission sites. Medical teams provided a wide variety of medical and dental services in programs on Apolima, Savai’i, and Upolu, treating a total of 3,520 patients. Biomedical repair technicians repaired 44 pieces of medical equipment, improving the Samoan medical system’s ability to diagnose and treat patients.

The veterinarians treated 266 animals, [with] several surgeries including resetting a broken leg on one dog and a number of animal population control procedures.

The preventive medicine [team] conducted a number of programs designed to [help] the Samoan Ministry of Health (MOH) improve its ability to serve its citizens. The team restored a 20,000 ULV truck-mounted fogger, the only equipment available to the MOH to counter a mosquito-borne dengue outbreak, and provided training on vector control. They also conducted municipal water quality testing.

Health educators taught basic life support to the Samoan police; cardiac life support, surgical knot tying, and diabetes education to Samoan health care providers; and diabetes management, heart disease and stroke prevention, basic nutrition, and dental care to Samoans awaiting treatment at medical civic action programs.

Engineering teams completed a number of projects in Samoa. On Apolima, the engineers installed 60 feet of additional gutters and downspouts to increase the community’s ability to capture fresh rain water in an existing water catchment tank.

On Savai’i, the combined engineering team from the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, and Samoa completed two projects. At Sasina Primary School, the team removed and replaced the assembly hall’s corrugated metal roof, exterior fascia and shiplap siding, exterior doors, and interior walls. The team also installed two new water catchment tanks and guttering to route rain water into them.

At Sataua Clinic, the team installed two new water catchment tanks, associated downspouts, a new pressure tank, and water pump.

On Upolu, the combined engineering team focused its efforts on the National Hospital in Apia, where it completed a number of projects including applying more than 5,800 square feet of non-slip coating to one of the hospital's key exterior walkways and renovating a structure used for patients' families. A new overhead roll up door was installed outside the hospital pharmacy to improve its security.

The Pacific Partnership team ventured [into] the community outside of the engineering and medical projects as well. The band played a number of events with the Samoan Police Band, including marching in the library week parade and the weekly police parade. At the request of the local youth orchestra, the band tuned three pianos and more than 20 violins and violas.

Pacific Partnership donated \$700 worth of books to the main library in Apia for distribution to school libraries throughout the country. Mission team members visited children at the Loto Tamafai School for the Disabled, sharing music and dance.

The U.S. Navy's Pacific Partnership is the dedicated humanitarian and civic assistance mission conducted with and through partner nations, non-governmental organizations, and other U.S. and international government agencies to execute a variety of humanitarian civic action missions in the Pacific Fleet area of responsibility.

Pacific Partnership 2009 is delivering Humanitarian and Civic Assistance missions from U.S. Naval Ship Richard E. Byrd, an underway replenishment ship, to the Oceanic nations of Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Tonga.