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by [Hoener, Greg](#) on 10/9/2013 4:09 PM

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We've tallied your votes, and we're ready to announce your favorite story as part of the 2013 Community Day Coverage Contest.

Congratulations go out to **Karen Eubanks** from Hawaii. She has won a \$150 donation for a great cause.

Thanks to the entire Hawaii team, along with all the associates who submitted a story.

You can read here full story below.

[Karen Eubanks, Military](#)

[National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific - Hawaii](#)

Over 80 associates from Forest City's Hawaii military housing volunteered at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (NMCP) for Forest City's 10th Annual Community Day. This veterans' cemetery holds interned remains of over 55,000 individuals in more than 35,000 gravesites. Forest City's Jeff Sandstrom, part of this year's planning committee, said, "For the 10th Annual Community Day we wanted to find a project where we could have a long-term impact while serving our entire community. Being able to volunteer in a way that also paid tribute to our country's service members was an incredible honor."

Forest City associates worked on three different projects while their landscaping contractor, KN Landscaping, also volunteered providing free landscaping services throughout the cemetery. The first Forest City project was framing and pouring foundations for the NMCP's Memorial Walk. This scenic walkway features memorial plaques donated by grateful organizations, individuals, and foreign countries thanking service members for their sacrifices. Typically organizations like the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, and the Navy League donate the memorials to the cemetery. Then a contractor would have to be hired to dig, frame, and pour a foundation for the memorial to rest upon. This typically costs \$2,000 per memorial. When the Forest City team approached NMCP, they were asked if they could build foundations for two memorials. Instead, Forest City associates were able to complete foundations for 10 memorials. Nadiene Siak, NMCP's Public Affairs Specialist, said, "Forest City's team was the best. They were the most effective and efficient volunteers I have ever worked with at the cemetery. It was great to have a group of highly skilled people willing to volunteer their time." Associate Travis Delima took the lead on coordinating foundation building and providing equipment for the project.

NMCP is located inside the Punchbowl Crater (named for its punchbowl shape) which was formed by a now-extinct volcano. This unique geological heritage created interesting challenges for the Forest City associates who needed to dig down 17 inches before framing, pouring, and leveling the concrete foundations. Forest City's associates used shovels, pickaxes, and a jackhammer to work their way through the layers of volcanic rock and soil in order to complete the 10 foundations.

The second Forest City project was providing geomapping for individual gravesites as part of a new program at NMCP. The cemetery is currently working on becoming the first veteran's cemetery to provide GPS positioning to help visitors locate individual gravesites more

easily. Forest City associates used their smartphones to take photographs of individual gravesites with embedded geographic positioning information. Forest City associate Ryan Araki was the lead for this project, providing technical expertise and downloading the pictures from each associate's phone. By the end of the day, associates had collected pictures and geographic positioning information for over 10,000 gravesites. Araki noted that our associates were so excited about this project he already has volunteers willing to go back on their own time to complete the remaining 25,000-plus gravesites.

The final Forest City project was sharpening 3,000 wooden dowels. These will be attached to American flags that the Boys Scouts of America will place on gravesites each Memorial Day. After seeing how rocky the soil is inside the PunchBowl crater, it's easier to understand why the dowels need to be sharpened before the Boy Scouts try to use them.

Associate Tatiana Quong, one of the event organizers, said, "A significant percentage of Forest City's Hawaii associates have family members buried at the NMCP, including General Manager Wendy Mekinda. This was an opportunity for us to honor service members while giving back to the community."
