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New Course Teaches Prevention of Domestic Violence

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PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii (NNS) -- In February, the Train the Trainer program held at Pearl Harbor helped all branches of the military, advocates and prosecutors learn about domestic violence.

The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, Department of Defense and National Center on Domestic and Sexual Violence sponsored the program, which aims to teach intervention and prevention of domestic violence.

“It was agreed that we really needed to bring this course to various communities, emphasizing cooperation between the military installations and the civilian law enforcement, and helping agencies to deal better with domestic violence,” said Deborah Tucker, instructor for the Train the Trainer course.

This is the first year that the course was conducted on Pearl Harbor, according to Chief Master-at-Arms (SW) Daniel Brindley who helped coordinate the event. The program is described as a trickle-down effect, in that the people who complete the course will then go out and educate others on involvement and prevention.

“We want everybody who successfully completes the week to go out and train other people with whom they work,” said Tucker. The program first teaches an understanding of where the attitudes and beliefs come from that lead to domestic violence and what strategies people should use to deal with it, said Tucker.

It then goes into what the professional goals and responsibilities are of advocates, law enforcement and prosecutors. Each of the groups plays a part in intervening effectively and stopping the violence.

“We go through everything from dispatch 9-1-1 calls, arriving at the scene, (and) safety for the victim and the officer in responding,” said Tucker.

According to Tucker, some questions the instructors pose include: What do you look for? What do you document? What kinds of statements are being made by the victim, the suspect, the children (and) the neighbors? What evidence can we collect just as we walk into that home that lets us know whether or not a crime has been committed?

Tucker also believes in reaching out to every case of domestic violence.

“We want people to come up with a plan for how they’re going to take what they’ve learned this week and not only share it with their colleagues, but reach out to other professionals and say ‘here’s what we’ve learned,’” said Tucker. “How do we form a different kind of partnership so that these cases don’t fall through the cracks?”

The course is new to not only Hawaii, but also across America in teaching people how to train others in domestic violence cases.

“Some people don’t have as much experience with domestic violence (and) have never been to a course that actually taught you or gave you materials to go out and train other people on it,” said Kristin Cocco, judge advocate general with the Air Force and student of the course. “There’s never been a course that I’ve been to that focused on that kind of thing. So from that standpoint of how to train, it’s been great,” expressed Cocco.

Tucker hopes the trickle-down effect will educate everyone on the seriousness of the problem.

“My overall goal is to bring to the military, law enforcement, advocates and prosecutors the best practice information so they are armed with that and can, in turn, teach other people the newest information,” said Tucker. “I want people to walk out of here energized (and) recommitted to recognizing this crime and intervening in it, stopping it.”

For more information, contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233).

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