



# KADENA CROSSROADS

*A Publication of the American Red Cross at Kadena Air Base*



## **Disaster Relief in the Carribean**

**By: Bethany Kirk**

When Hurricanes Irma and Maria struck the shores of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands in September 2017, thousands of people were left without power, food and livable homes. Those that survived the unimaginable destruction of the storms were left to pillage through the rubble, looking for loved ones and salvage their personal belongings.

While many in the U.S. banded together to donate resources for those affected by the storms, active duty military personnel overseas also wanted to give back and decided to act. Four volunteers from Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan, deployed to the Caribbean to aid in the American Red Cross disaster relief operations.

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## Volunteer with the American Red Cross

The American Red Cross at Kadena Station makes it easy to become a volunteer! To sign up, head over to [www.americanredcrosskadena.com](http://www.americanredcrosskadena.com), click on the “Volunteer” tab and follow the prompts to get started. Our volunteer opportunities are not one size fits all - we offer positions ranging from marketing and leadership to health and safety instructors, to special event help and more. In fact, there are positions available for anyone looking to make a difference in both small and large ways. Below are just some of the ways you can become involved and make a difference as a “Red Crosser.”

**Join the Disaster Action Team:** Be a first responder! The DAT is recruiting new volunteers. Through monthly training and meetings, DAT members are equipped to provide immediate relief in the event of any man-made or natural disaster, supplying those affected with shelter, clothing, food, water, and other necessities.

**Teach Health & Safety Classes:** CPR and Babysitter courses are a fundamental part of what our office provides a service to the armed forces. We are currently in need of instructors to teach our Adult CPR/ First Aid/AED classes, as well as our Babysitter Training courses to include pediatric CPR and First Aid certification.

**Leadership Positions:** Kadena Station is currently seeking the following positions:

- Disaster Action Team (DAT) Lead Volunteers
- Animal Reading Program Volunteers (and Dogs!)
- Volunteer Recognition Committee Volunteers
- Military Hospital Clinic Program Co-Lead
- Office Support Volunteer
- Emergency Communication Casework Volunteer
- Information Technology Volunteer



**Become a Red Cross Volunteer by visiting**  
**<http://www.americanredcrosskadena.com/become-a-volunteer.html>**

**Disaster Relief continued from page 1.** **Virgil Campbell** returned to his hometown of Charlotte Amalie in the Virgin Islands and decided to help both his family and those in the community affected by the hurricanes. Campbell knew the terrain well and was eager to help the survivors: medical care, personal care items, food, and water were needed the most. “Disaster response and communication” played a critical role in the success of the relief efforts. According to Campbell, “If you don’t know how to handle the situation, the situation will handle you.” Due to his active duty responsibilities, Campbell could only stay in the Virgin Islands for a short time, but his experience left a lasting impression.

Licensed nurse and healthcare professional **Luana Weeks** answered the call for Spanish-speaking volunteers to deploy to St. Croix after Hurricane Maria tore through the small island. During her time in St. Croix, Weeks monitored local residents in the shelter where she worked; checking blood pressure and blood sugar levels, as well as making sure residents took the proper dosage of medication. “Most of the people were in critical health. I was faced with making the decision of whether to send patients to the hospitals knowing that they were already overloaded with patients,” she described. Like Campbell, Weeks had a powerful impact on the storm survivors. “They saw us being there in a positive way because we helped them [with their care]. They knew we had their best interests in mind, they knew just how much the American Red Cross could help,” Weeks said.

**Charlie Escalera** and his wife **Stephanie Ramirez** deployed to Puerto Rico as Red Cross disaster workers. “I was really interested in helping my people,” Ramirez remarked. She and Escalera are native Puerto Ricans. The couple focused their efforts on completing Safe and Well forms for survivors to help with communication to remote family members. They also set up satellite communication locations, which enabled people to connect their cell phones and reach family and friends. Stephanie recalls the impact of these efforts on those they were helping, “They were happy because they finally got to talk to their family. We watched their sadness and despair change to happiness in those moments.”

Red Cross volunteer, **Geysel Pineiro**, also deployed to Puerto Rico.

The Red Cross continues to support relief efforts in those areas affected by Hurricanes Irma and Maria. These volunteers were recognized at Kadena Station’s Quarterly Recognition event on Friday, January 26th at the Kadena USO.

If you are interested in learning more about the Disaster Action Team, please contact the American Red Cross - Kadena Station at **DSN 635-1294** or **[kadena@redcross.org](mailto:kadena@redcross.org)**.

## Students Learn Importance of Emergency Preparedness



*Station Chair, Hannah Wilkes, and Regional Program Manager, Alesia Younes-Cooper present the Pillowcase Project to students on Kadena Air Base.*

This fall, the Kadena Red Cross visited Stearley Heights Elementary and Amelia Earhart Intermediate School to teach the importance of disaster preparedness. During these workshops, 3-5 graders participated in the Pillowcase Project, a program specifically designed to engage students in the act of preparing for natural disasters. Participants decorate and personalize their own pillowcases, which serve as containers for personal emergency supply kits. Students learned how to prepare for typhoons/hurricanes and earthquakes.

A special thanks to our presenters **Hannah Wilkes, Rachel Murtagh, and Jessica Johnson**; and assistant presenters **Adam Garcia, Stephanie Sullivan, and Prema Hoffman**.

## Volunteer Stats for Q1 & Q2

Thank you!



**114** new volunteers  
joined Kadena Station in Q1 & Q2

**We owe it all to our volunteers!**  
Since July 2017, 218 Kadena Station  
volunteers have logged a total  
of **8,993** volunteer hours across a  
variety of positions and events.

## Upcoming Courses



### In-Person Courses

- Adult & Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED (\$55)
- Babysitter's Training & Pediatric First Aid/CPR (\$70)
- Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers (BLS) (\$55)
- First Aid/CPR/AED Instructors Course (\$200)
- Wilderness and Remote First Aid (\$55) Basic Life Support (\$55)

### Online Courses

- Coping with Deployments (Free)
- Family First Aid & CPR-this course does not provide certification. (\$35)
- Cat and Dog First Aid (\$25)

### Blended Learning

Our Adult and Pediatric CPR/First Aid/AED courses are offered in two formats: the traditional classroom setting, and a combination of classroom and online coursework. Blended learning combines the hands-on approach of classroom learning, with the convenience of online course modules that can be worked at your own pace.

**Register for a course at:  
[www.classes.redcross.org](http://www.classes.redcross.org)**

## A Special Thank You to our Volunteers

Volunteers from the American Red Cross - Kadena Station were recognized on Tuesday, October 24, 2017, and Friday, January 26, 2018, at our quarterly volunteer recognition receptions. Our volunteers (including youth) completed close to 9,000 hours during the first half of fiscal year 2018. Volunteer and community events included blood drives, training and classes, and community events on Kadena AB, White Beach, and Camp Shields.

Kadena Station presented Presidential Service Awards to 42 volunteers at the recognition events. These prestigious awards are given to volunteers who dedicate over 100 hours of service to an organization over a 12 month period. Congratulations to all award recipients and to our Volunteer of the Quarter, **Peggy Vinyard** (Q1) and **Marie Gibbs** (Q2), Youth Volunteer of the Quarter, **Alexander Sullivan**, and Instructor of the Quarter, **Matthew Li** (Q1) and **Jeremey Schlegelmilch** (Q2).

We appreciate your dedication to the American Red Cross and our service members here in Okinawa.



### Presidential Service Award Recipients

**Gold Award Winners**

- Maria Gago
- Moe Jean
- Tajiannah Johnson
- Betty Patrick
- Luana Vendramel Santos Weeks

**Silver Award Winners**

- Virgil Campbell
- Cathy Catling
- Inabell Espinosa
- Maria Gago
- Moe Jean
- Shelley Jersey
- Herica Kennedy

Jordan McWhorter

- Geysel Pineiro
- Maria Rivera Carpio
- Prema Supramaniam Hoffman
- Ginny Vance
- Jessica Vinyard
- Peggy Vinyard

**Bronze Award Winners**

- Brooke Bigler
- Maria Rivera Carpio
- Carli Duplessis
- Carlos Escalera
- Meghan Fields
- Hugh Harsono

Moe Jean

- Kristina Johnstone
- Bethany Kirk
- Jordan McWhorter
- Daphne Pearson
- Geysel Pineiro
- Stephanie Ramirez
- Alexis Sanchez Martinez
- Zachary Sanchez Martinez
- Jeremey Schlegelmilch
- Elexia Simpson
- Marilyn Smith
- Stephanie Sullivan
- Jennifer Titus-Tuttle
- Peggy Vinyard
- Stephanie Winkelhake

## Volunteers of the Quarter

**Peggy Vinyard** has dedicated over 257 hours since becoming a volunteer with the Kadena Station American Red Cross in January 2017, and she has already received the Bronze and Silver Presidential Volunteer Service Awards. She formerly served as the station's Chair of Volunteers, where she oversaw the volunteer program and recruited new volunteers from the community. Vinyard's dedication to the American Red Cross surpassed her position responsibilities. In her short time with the Red Cross, she has implemented a new interview policy, new volunteer orientation packets leads the new volunteer orientation and placement of new volunteers. She has fostered relationships with squadrons and units at Kadena Air Base in an effort to recruit more volunteers. As a result, she successfully recruited over 45 volunteers in the first quarter of 2018. Vinyard is also a course instructor, teaching Basic First Aid and CPR/AED. When she is not volunteering with the Red Cross, Vinyard serves as a Key Spouse, a board leader with the Okinawa International Women's Club (OIWC), and treasurer for Boy Scouts Troop 102. She lives in Okinawa with her husband of 19 years and 2 teenagers.



Pictured Above: Peggy Vinyard received Volunteer of the Quarter at the Recognition Luncheon in October 2017 for Q1.

**Matthew Li** has completed over 217 hours since becoming a Red Cross volunteer over a year ago. Li currently serves as the Health and Safety Vice-chair, where he has played a vital role in the success of the Health and Safety programs at Kadena. "He has displayed outstanding professional and dedication throughout his time as an instructor and volunteer," says Ginny Vance, position. In addition to teaching classes, Li also dedicates time supporting the Kadena Station office.



## Contact Us

The American Red Cross at Kadena Station is located in building 6800, near Gate 1 and Jack's Place.

DSN: 634-1294

Email: [Kadena@redcross.org](mailto:Kadena@redcross.org)

[www.AmericanRedCrossKadena.com](http://www.AmericanRedCrossKadena.com)

