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CNATTU Whidbey helps a local family with their Habitat home

WHIDBEY ISLAND, Wash. – Sailors from the Center of Navy Aviation Technical Training Unit Whidbey Island (CNATTU) and the Naval Ocean Processing Facility (NOPF) assisted Habitat for Humanity of Island County with their latest home construction project Feb 13.

Damion Lopez, construction manager with Habitat helped supervise the mostly-Navy team and said that their contributions are invaluable.

“The work that the Navy volunteers do varies depending on the stage of the home build,” said Lopez. “Their skills allow them to do anything needed from painting or framing to cutting and laying tile. Without the Navy, a home build could take up to six months, but with Navy hands, a house can be done in three months.”

Lopez has completed about 40 homes, with roughly 70 percent of the volunteers being Navy-affiliated.

“The Island County Habitat branch is blessed to have little problem getting volunteers -- we are spoiled and very lucky to have the help from the Navy,” he added. “Other locations across the country often struggle to get as many dedicated volunteers.”

Aviation Electronics Technician 1st Class Chris Tancrell has assisted with about 12 homes since he has been stationed as an instructor at the CNATTU on board Naval Air Station (NAS) Whidbey.

"I really enjoy construction work and love the job site," said Tancrell. "It takes me back to my high school days when I was working in heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC)."

Sonar Technician 1st Class Sarah Myslinski from NOPF also volunteers a significant portion of her off-time with Habitat.

"I've volunteered too many hours to count; I love doing this because I learn something new every time, and it is interesting to see the different stages of a house build," she said. "During this session I learned how to do inside trim work."

According to CNATTU Instructor Chief Aviation Electronics Technician Anthony Zavala, volunteer service of any kind is extremely important; good for the Navy and the community.

"Helping to build a home is an easy way that a Sailor can give back to the local community and build skills that will help them in the future," said Zavala. "As Sailors, we have a vested interest in the community we live in. The community's success is our success, even if they are here for just one tour -- the impact can last."

According to Lopez, Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit, ecumenical Christian ministry founded on the conviction that every man, woman, and child should have a decent, safe and affordable place to live. The nonprofit

organization was founded in 1976 and is working to address issues of poverty in by constructing housing around the world.

CNATTU Whidbey Island provides initial rating "A" school and career "C" school training to the fleet on the EA-6B, P-3C, and EP-3E aircraft. CNATTU also provides training in many other aspects of the Navy and Marine Corps Team, including training in Micro-Miniature Repair (2M), Senior Enlisted Aviation Maintenance (SEAM), and Flight Deck Fire-Fighting.

For more information about CNATTU NAS Whidbey Island
<https://www.netc.navy.mil/centers/cnatt/whidbey>

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Story by Naval Aircrewman 1st Class Ted Mansikka, Center for Naval Aviation Technical Training Unit Whidbey Island (CNATTU) Public Affairs