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- 1) What branch and unit were you in? *Army, Alpha Company, 4th Battalion, 22nd Infantry, HI, 3-year 1993-1996 (until unit was disbanded), then 8 months 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, HI.*
- 2) What was your highest rank? *E-4 Specialist.*
- 3) Are you still enlisted as a reservist or National Guard? *No.*
- 4) Why did you join the service? *I was 18 and fresh out of high school and I wanted to do some traveling on my own. Next thing I know I was on the plane to Georgia, surrounded by a bunch of people I didn't know, but it was a good experience. I was glad I did it because I wanted to do something on my own.*
- 5) What did you like the most about being in? *Camaraderie, hanging out with fellow soldiers, teamwork.*
- 6) What did you like the least? *Being left in the dark by higher-ups. Sitting around waiting for orders.*
- 7) What moment most defined your military experience? *Deployment to Haiti for 'Operation Uphold Democracy', where I was able to save the life of a local boy. Kids would visit our post on their way to or from school. This boy had cut his wrist on a sharp piece of glass and was bleeding pretty badly, so I pulled out a field dressing and administered first-aid. Got an Army Commendation for it.*
- 8) What made you choose firefighting as a career? *I like helping people out. I really took the incident in Haiti to heart and being a firefighter gives me the same opportunity with others.*
- 9) What do you like the most about firefighting? *Really like the camaraderie, especially at this bigger station, getting to go out on calls, rescues, fires, you have it. I'm more of an outdoors kind of guy who enjoys the teamwork. Since I'm assigned to HazMat Task Force 43 in City of Industry, which is the busiest one in LA County, I get to train with the military, like the 9th CST out of Los Alamitos, along with specialized training we do with ATF, and the FBI.*
- 10) What do you like least about firefighting? *Some incidents where we have a really bad auto accident. There was one where a pickup truck had been involved with kids ejected from the back. We came up on the incident and stuff was scattered all over the place. I saw this 'Hello Kitty' backpack that was the same as my daughter's and it really hit me hard, but then I had to just jump right back into work. We're constantly doing EMT training and, it's weird, but it kicks in and we get to work. After the fact, though, you reflect on what happened. It's just repetitive training, and I think the military training helped me out with that, too.*